Ikhmaalush Shiyam

Perfection of Morals

Shaykh Ibn Ataullah Iskandari

Commentary by

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Translated by

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PREFACE

Ikm~lush Shiyam (Perfection of Morals) is a treatise for the Muhibbeen (Lovers of Allah). Although every Mu'min is a Lover of Allah, this treatise is largely directed to the attention of the Muhibbeen who are conscious of Divine Love. Nevertheless, it will benefit even the unconscious lovers by inducing in them some consciousness of the love lying dormant in their hearts which have been created for being the Abodes of Divine Love.

Since Ikm~lush Shiyam is a treatise for Muhibbeen, it speaks the language of love – Divine Love. Thus, the book abounds with paradoxes and seemingly contradictory calls and cries sounded for the guidance of those who understand the language of Allah's Love. The advices and prescriptions herein are balm for the Souls searching the Path of Love, leading to their Beloved, Allah Azza Wa Jal. This book is not for the rational probing of a sceptic mind stunted by crass materialism. While such a mind denuded of Divine Illumination will be incapable of absorbing the treasures of Ikm~lush Shiyam, the heart basking in the warmth of Divine Love will readily comprehend and relish the wealth of guidance so necessary for the perfection of morals – a perfection without which the Muhib (Lover) cannever aspire to reach his Beloved.

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MEANINGS OF SOME TERMS

For lack of proper translations, certain terms are used in their original forms. The rich and proper meanings of many words used in Urdu and Arabic cannot be conveyed by a straight-forward translated or literal version. It is, therefore, considered advisable to present here some explanation of certain Urdu terms which will be recurring throughout this treatise.

Mushaahadah: Literally mushaahadah means: observation, vision, to vie to behold. In the context of Tasawwuf it means: To see Allah Ta'ala with the eyes of the heart; spiritual vision; being in close communion with Allah Ta'ala, which is the spiritual (roohaani) experience which produces greater conviction in the heart than the vision of the physical eyes.

Sulook: Literally it means: road, path, way. In the language of the Auliya refers to Tasawwuf or the Path of moral reformation and spiritual elevation leading to Allah Ta'ala.

Saalik: The devotee in Sulook; the Sufi.

Ma-aarif: Literally it means: knowledges, sciences. In Sufi terminology refers to spiritual knowledge acquired by the process of Divine Intuition.

Asraar: This term has two different meanings.

(1) Spiritual mysteries acquired from Allah Ta'ala by way of Divi Illumination.

(2) The spiritual faculties within the human body. There are six su faculties, viz., Aql (intelligence), Rooh (soul), Qalb (spiritual heart), Nafs (the ego or carnal-self), Khafi and Akhfaa. There are no English terms for the latter two faculties.

Khaaliq: The Creator, Allah Ta'ala.

Makhluqaat: Literally it refers to all creation. Sometimes it refers to on mankind.

Ghairullah: All things besides Allah Ta'ala.

Bandah: Slave of Allah.

Bandagi: Worship, service, being a slave.

Wusool: Literally it means: union, arrival. In Tasawwuf it means the meeti of the Saalik with Allah. It signifies the end of the spiritual sojourn, the Saalik having reached his goal — Allah Ta'ala.

Ruboobiyat: Being the Rabb; Providence; Divinity.

Uboodiyat: Devotion to Allah; Being a true slave of Allah.

Taa-at: Acts of obedience.

Jazb: Literally it means: to be absorbed. In Tasawwuf it means: to absorbed in Divine Love to the degree of the intellect being incapacitated by Allah's Love.

Ghaflat: Carelessness, unmindfulness. To be unmindful of Allah and H Commands, obliviousness.

Fikr: To be concerned, to behave responsibly.

Kashf: Information which Allah Ta'ala reveals to the Wali (Saint) by way inspiration cast into his heart.

Ilhaam: Same as Kashf, but of a lower class.

Zaat: The Very Being of Allah Ta'ala.

Sifaat: The Attributes of Allah Ta'ala.

Karaamat: Miracles demonstrated by the Auliya.

Nafs: The faculty in man, which leads him to evil. Its propensity is nothi other than evil.

Anwaar: This is the plural of noor. It refers to spiritual rays of light whi the Saalik perceives. Such radiance emanates from a variety of sources, both good and bad..

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

?? ??????? ? ? ?? ? ?µ ?? Ơ??

This humble one has mentioned in the introduction of Irshaadul Mulook last Ramadhaan that the two books, viz. Irshaadul Mulook and Ikm~lush Shiyam have been prescribed for the numerous sincere friends who pass the holy month of Ramadhaan here (in the khaanqah).

An explanation regarding Irshaadul Mulook was presented in the introduction of the book. Ikm~lush Shiyam is a commentary and explanation prepared by Hadhrat Maulana Abdullah Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), which he wrote on the instruction of his Shaikh and Murshid Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh). It is the sharah (commentary and explanation) of Itm~mun Ni'am which is the work of Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh). Itm~mun Ni'am is the Urdu translation of Tabweebul Hikam.

Hadhrat Maulana Abdullah Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) was among the selected students of my father, Hadhrat Maulana Yahya (rahmatullah alayh). From the beginning to end he acquired all his knowledge from my father.

When in Shawwaal 1311 Hijri, my father came to Gangoh in the service of Hadhrat Qutb-e-}lam Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) to pursue Dorah Hadith (the final year in the }lim Fadhil academic course of study), there was in the eastern part of the town, a famous Musjid known by the name L~l Musjid. Even today it is known by this name. Many new buildings have now been added to the Musjid. But at that time it was a simple structure. In one of its rooms my father, my uncle Maulana Ridhaul-Hasan and some other students were staying. These students would attend the khaanqah of Qutb-e-}lam for lessons. After acquiring the lesson, they would return to their Musjid. Maulana Abdullah lived near to this Musjid.

At the time, Maulana Abdullah was about 10 years old. Despite his tender age, he was regular with his Salaat. He would perform the five daily Salaat punctually at the Musjid. This action of the lad appealed greatly to my father. He, therefore, encouraged him to pursue Arabic (i.e. higher Islamic education). He told the lad to study Arabic during the school holidays so that he becomes a Molvi along with his acquisition of secular education. At that time the lad was attending an English medium secular school.

For some time the lad studied Arabic while continuing with his secular studies. Finally Allah Ta'ala aided him and he abandoned his secular studies. He succeeded in becoming a perfect }lim of the first degree. After obtaining ri (Maulana Khalil Ahmad - ?khilaafat from Hadhrat Aqdas Sah~ranp rahmatullah alayh), he became a Shaikh-e-Tariqat.

In Tadhkiratul Khalil, Maulana }shiq Il~hi (rahmatullah alayh) gives the following account of his (Maulana Abdullah's) early period:

> "Molvi Abdullah Sahib Gangohi was the Majaaz-e-Tariqat (Khalifah) of Hadhrat (i.e. Maulana Khalil Ahmad). He is the student of Maulana Muhammad Yahya Sahib. He studied in an English medium school. He frequented the neighbourhood Musjid for Namaaz. Maulana Muhammad Yahya Sahib who had his living quarters in a room at the Musjid, observed the enthusiasm of the lad for Namaaz. He thus concluded that it would not be remote if the lad becomes inclined towards Deeni education. He, therefore, encouraged and induced the lad to study Arabic in his free time. Molvi Abdullah complied and commenced the study of Mizaan (an elementary Arabic grammar text book). He had some difficulty in learning Arabic. Once, after being unable to memorise a section, Maulana Yahya Sahib commented:
> 'O Servant of Allah! What injustice is this? You have spent the entire day until evening memorising one gardaan (a string of 14 verbs which are the scales of all other similar verbs)."

The lad dejectedly responded:

"No, Molvi Sahib! It were two gardaan."

So saying , he began to cry.

In short, encouraging him, Maulana Sahib managed to induce the lad to progress in his studies. As a result of this encouragement, the lad abandoned the study of English and applied himself fully in the pursuit of Arabic.

Allah Ta'ala had blessed him with good fortune. He, thus, first became an }lim ba Amal (an }lim who gives practical expression to his knowledge), then he progressed to become a Saalik (in the Path of Tasawwuf) and attained the rank of Majaaz-e-Tariqat. Viewing it from this perspective, the righteousness of Maulana Abdullah (rahmatullah alayh) will also constitute capital in the Book of Deeds of Maulana Yahya (rahmatullah alayh). If it was not for the good and wise counsel of Maulana Yahya Sahib, Allah alone knows in which deviation he (Maulana Abdullah) would have ended up in his pursuit of western education.

After the demise of Maulana Muhammad Yahya (rahmatullah alayh), he (Maulana Abdullah) developed a bond of love for Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Sahib, the son of his Ustaad. Inspite of being older, he (Maulana Abdullah) adopted a relationship of respect and honour with Maulana Zakariyya Sahib. Once he said:

> "Molvi Zakariyya, I saw a dream. Explain its interpretation. The dream goes thus: From the heaven a huge pomegranate dropped. As it struck the earth all the seeds scattered. Maulana Muhammad Sahib who was sitting nearby, said: 'Brother, in this pomegranate one seed belongs to me."

After narrating this dream, he insisted that Maulana Zakariyya Sahib presents an interpretation. When he repeatedly said that he was not versed in the interpretation of dreams, Maulana Abdullah said:

> "Alright, I shall explain its interpretation. The one seed refers to me. I, in fact, belong to Molvi Sahib (i.e. Maulana Yahya Sahib).

This is the glad tidings of my maut and then of my maghfirat (forgiveness)."

A few months thereafter, Maulana Abdullah passed away. While afflicted with tuberculosis he would laugh and speak. He departed from this world in this condition. Inna lillahi wa inna ilayhi raaji-oon.

Hadhrat Maulana Abdullah (rahmatullah alayh) was among the very special and close students of my father – may Allah sanctify his soul. The Ustaad was proud of his student and vice versa. He was among the senior ri. Hadhrat Maulana }shiq Il~hi ?khulafaa of my Shaikh, Hadhrat Sah~ranp has recorded in Tadhkiratul Khalil that he (Maulana Abdullah) obtained the khilaafat in about 1327 Hijri. Maulana Shabbir Ali confirms this in his b.?Makt

This was the year when Maulana Marhoom (i.e. Maulana Abdullah) was a mudarris (teacher) at Madrasah Maz~hirul Uloom. In the month of Shawwaal ri was proceeding to Hij~z, Maulana ?1333 Hijri when Hadhrat Sah~ranp Abdullah requested renewal of Bay't. Coincidentally, I (Maulana Zakariyya) too had requested Bay't the very same day. Hadhrat instructed us to come (for bay't) on that day after Maghrib when he had completed his nafl Salaat.

I remained seated at a distance behind Hadhrat immediately after Maghrib. After the Nawaafil, when Hadhrat lifted his hands for duaa, I went nearby. Maulana Abdullah (rahmatullah alayh) who was sitting further away in the old section of the Madrasah, also came forward. Hadhrat took hold of our hands and started the recitation of the khutbah. Maulana Abdullah was overwhelmed by emotion so much that he sobbed loudly. He continued sobbing until the end of the proceedings. The tremble in the voice of Hadhrat ri) indicated the profound effect which Maulana ?Aqdas (Maulana Sah~ranp Abdullah's emotional state had exercised.

In view of the fact that I am unaware of the initial life period of Maulana Abdullah – May Allah brighten his resting place – I referred to Hadhrat Maulana Al-H~j Zafar Ahmad Th~nvi Shaikhul Islam of Pakistan and Al-H~j

Maulana Shabbir Ali Th~nvi (the cousin of Hakimul Ummat Th~nvi – rahmatullah alayh). Both were among the special students of Maulana Abdullah (rahmatullah alayh). I reproduce here the replywhich I received from them.

Maulana Shabbir Ali's Letter

"Respected Brother, Assalaamu Alaikum wa rahmatullah wa barakatuhu. May Allah keep you safe.

I am in receipt of your letter. The great effort which you have expended in the acquisition of Knowledge, as well as the effort you are presently applying in the dissemination of knowledge, are bound to have an effect on your physical health. Insha'Allah, Allah Ta'ala will reward you in full measure. Since your rest and peace are interwoven with the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge, it will be sheer ignorance to advise you now to take rest. However, I do make fervent duaa that Allah Ta'ala bestows safety and complete health to you so that you are blessed with comfort and rest along with easy acquisition and dissemination of knowledge. }meen.

On this occasion the meeting (i.e. with Maulana Zakariyya) was fleeting and I was left yearning. If it was not for my indisposition, I would certainly have come as far as the airport to gain some extra time with you, but I was helpless. May Allah Ta'ala once again grant us the fortune of meeting in health and safety, }meen.

Regarding my honourable Ustaad, Maulana Abdullah Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) about whose life you have requested information, at the time when I was in his service I lacked the understanding and it did not occur to me to keep note of the different years. In fact, even now I lack such perception, but at that time I was a minor.

Anyhow, on the basis of my age, I shall give approximate dates of events. I hope that your questions will be answered in this way.

Question 1: When was Maulana Abdullah Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) first appointed in Thanabovan? What were the special reasons for his appointment?

Answer: I was born on 8th Ramadhaan 1312 Hijri. At the age of 6, Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat and his wife, taking me from my parents, adopted me. They returned to Thanabovan with me. Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat became concerned with my education. I now write what I had repeatedly heard from my honourable Ustaad (Maulana Abdullah).

He would say:

> “Hadhrat Maulana Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) came to Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) where he met Maulana Muhammad Yahya (rahmatullah alayh). Hadhrat Maulana Thanvi said to him: ‘I require an able student for the education of my child. If you have any such student, do assign him to me.’
> Maulana Muhammad Yahya Sahib then assigned me (i.e. Maulana Abdullah) to Hadhrat Maulana Thanvi and said: ‘Insha’Allah he will teach to your satisfaction. I have confidence in him.’ ”

Subsequently, Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat brought my honourable Ustaad along with him to Thanabovan. It is obvious from my age of 6 years, that it was the year 1318 Hijri. Hence, the coming of my honourable Ustaad to Thanabovan was in 1318 Hijri or at the latest in the beginning of 1319 Hijri.

The speciality of my honourable Ustaad was that his ability and qualification were attested by the Ustaad of our Ustaads (viz. by Maulana Muhammad Yahya).

Question 2: The reason for his appointment as a Mudarris (Teacher) at r??r and his return from Sah~ranp?Sah~ranp

Answer: This humble one (i.e. Maulana Shabbir Ali) again was the reason for these two events.

Just as the Ustaad of my honourable Ustaad (rahmatullah alayh) had taught students with great affection and absorption, so too did my Ustaad teach me. Thus, when I was entrusted to my honourable Ustaad, he taught me some Urdu and then started with Farsi. During that era the text books, }mad Naamah, etc. were used for beginners. But my honourable Ustaad wrote a special kitaab for me. He named the kitaab, Taysirul Mubtadi.

In the introduction of Taysirul Mubtadi, my honourable Ustaad, stating the reason for writing the book says:

> "I have to commence the Farsi and Arabic of a respectable child."

That 'respectable child' in fact is this self-same humble one (i.e. Maulana Shabbir Ali).

This process of affectionate instruction continued until I was 14 years old and had completed Hidaayah, Mishkaat, etc. Now, Hadhrat Maulana Thanvi
r for Dorah (the final ?(rahmatullah alayh) planned to send me to Sah~ranp
year of the }lim Faadhil course). He, therefore, wrote to Hadhrat Maulana
ri (rahmatullah alayh) seeking his advice. Hadhrat Maulana ?Sah~ranp
ri responded, saying that I should be sent and that he would keep ?Sah~ranp
me as one of his own children and teach me. After this response, my going was confirmed. This was in 1326 Hijri.

My honourable Ustaad then said to Hakimul Ummat Maulana Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh):

> "Shabbir is still young. He never went to stay outside. He will
> r. I therefore, wish that ?feel strange and lonely in Sah~ranp
> some arrangement be made here (in Thanabovan) as I wish to

r. He is used to me, hence he will not ?go with him to Sah~ranp
r.”?feel lonely in Sah~ranp

Hadhrat Thanvi asked: “What will you do there for a living?”

My Ustaad replied: “It is a city. I shall work somewhere. My heart cannot tolerate Shabbir going alone.” (At the time of reading this, I [i.e. Maulana Zakariyya] was overwhelmed with emotion and tears flowed from my eyes. Oh! What a noble Ustaad he was. The eyes yearn to see such illustrious men. It is my fervent supplication that Allah brings about my end with Imaan so that I attain a place among the shoes of these illustrious souls.)

Hakimul Ummat wrote to my father:

r. His Ustaad ?‘It has been arranged to send Shabbir to Sah~ranp insists on accompanying him. Here (in Thanabovan) the Madrasah pays him a wage of 10 rupees per month. It will be good if you undertake this payment.’

My father replied that he would present 15 rupees a month to Maulana Abdullah (rahmatullah alayh).

Thus, in Shawwaal 1326, my honourable Ustaad took me to
r, in my presence, the discussion took ?r. At Sah~ranp?Sah~ranp
ri (rahmatullah alayh). My ?place with Hadhrat Sah~ranp
honourable Ustaad also mentioned the monthly allocation stated
ri (rahmatullah alayh) said: ?by my father. Hadhrat Sah~ranp
“We need a Mudarris. If you accept, this Madrasah will pay 20 or 25 rupees per month. My honourable Ustaad happily accepted this proposal. However, he added: ‘I shall keep Shabbir with
ri accepted this condition. In view of my ?me.’ Hadhrat Sah~ranp
ri arranged that Dorah ?age (of only 14 years), Hadhrat Sah~ranp

Hadith should be extended over two years for me. Consequently, I accomplished Dorah Hadith in two years. My honourable r for two years.?Ustaad also lived in Sah~ranp

After completing Dorah Hadith I expressed my desire to again do Dorah Hadith under Hadhrat Deobandi (rahmatullah alayh). At that time my age was 16 years. It was 1328 Hijri. My honourable Ustaad said: 'Now, ma-sha'Allah, you are big. You have experienced living away from home. I am now confident. By all means go to Deoband.

ri:?My honourable Ustaad said to Hadhrat Sah~ranp "I stayed here because of Shabbir. Now he will be going to Deoband. He now does not need me. The people of Kandhlah are insisting that I come. If you consent, I shall go there." ri happily consented. My ?Hadhrat Maulana Sah~ranp r. ?honourable Ustaad left directly for Kandhlah from Sah~ranp He did not go to Thanabovan. This was the year 1328 Hijri.

Question 3: Where did he pursue Dorah Hadith?

Answer: There was no specific mention of Dorah Hadith. However, he repeatedly expressed himself thus: 'I have studied everything by Hadhrat Maulana Kandhalvi (rahmatullah alayh). In all probability, he studied Dorah Hadith too by Maulana Kandhalvi. I have calculated the years from my age of 6. It is possible that I have erred in this. I came with Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat either at the age of 5 or 7 years. Therefore, if my estimate (of 6 years) is not in accordance with my age recorded in the register of the Madrasah, then the latter is correct. (According to the Madrasah register, the age appears to be 7.)

r, my honourable Ustaad ?During his two-year stay in Sah~ranp was conferred the mantle of khilaafat by Hadhrat Maulana

ri (rahmatullah alayh). In conclusion, I humbly ?Sah~ranp request that you make duaa for my Zaahiri (external) and Baatini (internal) reformation and for my end on Imaan, Was-salaam. Convey my salaams to whomever you wish. With duaa.

Ahqar Muhammad Shabbir
Ali Thanvi
Nazimabad, Karachi,
30th Rabiul Awwal 1387
9th July 1967

According to the Madrasah records, Maulana Abdullah Sahib r on 12th Shawwaal 1327 and ?(rahmatullah alayh) came to Sah~ranp departed for Hajj with the seniors of the Madrasah during Shawwaal 1328. After his return in Muharram 1329, he remained in the service of the Madrasah from the month of Safar for 1 month and 24 days. He then resigned. He was initially employed at the Madrasah for the wage of 15 rupees per month. The final examination of Maulana Shabbir Ali Sahib was during Sha'baan 1331.

The Letter of Maulana Zafar Ahmad Thanvi Shaikhul Islam of Pakistan.

"My honourable Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Sahib, Shaikhul Hadith, May Allah keep you safe. May He honour and protect you.

Your letter was received after a considerable time. I did not receive a reply for the postcard which I had sent you from Karachi nor for the letter which I had sent to the address of Azeez Haroun in Nizamuddin, Delhi. Yesterday I received your postcard dated 12th Rabiul Awwal. I am grieved to learn of your weakening eyesight. May Allah Ta'ala transform weakness with strength, and may He enhance and perfect the benefit of your writings, }meen.

I too am not aware of the correct birth date of Maulana Abdullah Sahib Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). However, I think that I was 13 years of age when I started my elementary studies in Sarf and Nahw in Thanabovan. The age of Maulana Abdullah Sahib was approximately 25 years. My birth was on 13th Rabiul Awwal 1310, hence the birth of Maulana must have been during 1298.

Maulana Abdullah Sahib acquired his full education from Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Yahya (rahmatullah alayh). Maulana's father had him admitted to an English school, but on the advice of Maulana Muhammad Yahya, he was removed and assigned to him (Maulana Yahya) for Deeni education.

Maulana Muhammad Yahya Sahib would also financially assist Maulana Abdullah's father so as to somewhat compensate the removal of Maulana Abdullah from English school.

Maulana Abdullah Sahib completed his studies in three years. Then, when Hakimul Ummat had requested Maulana Muhammad Yahya to arrange for a Mudarris for Kh~nqah Imd~diyah (in Thanabovan), Maulana Abdullah was sent to Thanabovan. He had just completed his studies. His wage was fixed at 9 rupees per month. However, Maulana Muhammad Yahya Sahib had advised him to also conduct a business of selling kitaabs. He used to give him books from his own bookshop to enable him to continue with this business. Apparently, he initially gave him a substantial number of books at no charge. Thereafter he supplied him books at a price.

On account of this trade he was not concerned of the low wage. He could, therefore, fulfil the obligation of teaching with peace of mind.

Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayh) had also entrusted the work of recording his ma-waaiz (lectures) to Maulana Abdullah. This further augmented his monthly income.

Maulana Abdullah Sahib was an expert in the elementary subjects of Sarf, Nahw and Adab. In fact, he had written Taysirul Mubtadi for us. He would

daily write the lesson and before teaching it, show it to Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayh). In this way, Taysirul Mubtadi was compiled and printed. It has received wide acclaim. He acquired monetary gain as well from the publication of this book. Initially, he himself had it printed.

Along with Mith~n, Mun-shaib and Panj Ganj, I had studied Taysirul Mubtadi. During the same period Maulana taught us to translate from Urdu to Arabic and from Arabic to Urdu.

After Asr he would take us along for a walk. Along the walk he would recite the Qur'aan and test us with regard to the grammatical construction of the Qur'aanic words. Thus, during the time of studying Nahwmier I acquired practice in writing and speaking Arabic. During this time in a letter which I had written to a friend in Deoband, I mentioned two Arabic verses which I had composed. On seeing this letter, Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayh) reprimanded me severely, saying that this was the time for effort and learning, not wasting time in poetry. Nevertheless, he told Maulana Abdullah Sahib:

> "Although I have reprimanded Zafar for indulgence in poetry, I must say that I am impressed by your excellent teaching. This is clear from the fact that the learner of Nahwmier has gained the ability to compose poetry. Inspite of the verses having no literary value, the grammatical construction is correct."

I have learnt the following Kitaabs from Maulana: Mizaan, Mumsha-ib, Panj Ganj, Nahwmier, Sharah Mi-ate }mil, Hidaayatun Nahw and At-ta'reeful Adabiz Zafeer which is a book in adab (literature), the author of which was ri (rahmatullah alayh). Thereafter I commenced ?Maulana Abdullah Jonp Qudoori and Qur'aan translation. This was during 1323 Hijri.

At this time Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayh) learnt by way of kashf that the time of Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi's (rahmatullah alayh) demise was imminent. He therefore advised Maulana Abdullah who was the Mureed of Maulana Gangohi, to take leave for six months from Thanabovan Madrasah and to stay in the service of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh).

During this time, Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat consistently advised his associates to stay in the service of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). My brother, Maulana Saeed Ahmad Sahib and I too were sent to Gangoh to visit Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). There may not again be another opportunity of meeting him. We thus stayed three days in Gangoh. We would visit Hadhrat Gangohi after Fajr in his room in the company of Maulana Muhammad Yahya (rahmatullah alayh). Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) asked me: 'Who are you?' I replied: "The nephew of Maulana Ashraf Ali Sahib." Hadhrat responded: "The grandson of Shaikh Nih~l Ahmad." I said: "Yes". I requested Hadhrat for duaa and he made duaa in profusion for me.

At this time Maulana Abdullah Sahib had already taken up residence in Gangoh. He would keep us in the majlis (sitting or session of ta'leem and naseehat) from Zuhr to Asr. Although we lacked understanding at that time, we still remember the spiritual light of those sessions.

In the absence of Maulana Abdullah Sahib, I studied Qur'aan translation by Shah Luft-e-Rasool Sahib; part of At-Talkhisaatul Ashr by Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat and the remainder by my elder brother. Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat at this time informed us that on account of having commenced writing Tafseer Bayaanul Qur'aan, he could not find time any longer for teaching. I shall take you both to my special students in Kanpur where you will be admitted to Madrasah J~miul Uloom. You can complete your studies there. We were subsequently admitted to the Madrasah in Kanpur.

When Maulana Muhammad Ish~q (rahmatullah alayh) took my entrance examination, he asked: "Which Kitaabs have you done thus far?" I informed him. He then commented:

"You have not studied Kaafiyah, neither Sharah Jaami nor Mukhtasarul Ma'aani. What do you intend to study now? I replied:

"If my studies had continued in Thanabovan then I would have studied Hidaayah, Jalaa-lain, Mishkaat or Taysirul Usool."

He said: "Without Noorul Anwaar and Mukhtasarul Ma-aani, how will you study Mishkaat and Jalaalain? Alright! Recite in Hidaayah }khirain from ahead of where the other reciters have stopped."

After I had recited the ibaarat (Arabic text) correctly, he instructed me to translate. I translated correctly. He then told me to explain the meaning. I said that the ibaarat which I had recited is related to the section above. "Allow me to read first the relevant section." On hearing this, Maulana said: "Most certainly you can study Hidaayah, Mishkaat and Jalaalain." I was thus admitted to the Madrasah. He then said to Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat: "Indeed this is your karaamat (miracle). Without having studied Sharah Jaami, Mukhtasarul Ma-aani and Noorul Anwaar, Molvi Zafar Ahmad has correctly recited the ibaarat of Hidaayah }khirain and translated it correctly despite not having studied it."

Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayh) laughed and commented: "This is not a karaamat. In reality, it is the excellent teaching method of Maulana Abdullah Sahib. His teaching of the elementary text books is excellent. As a result, the students acquire a thorough practice in translating from Arabic to Urdu and Urdu to Arabic."

While I was on the journey in Kanpur with Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat, news of the demise of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) was received. Inna lil-laahi wa inna ilayhi raajioon. (Verily, we are for Allah, and we shall be returning to Him.)

After this event, Maulana Abdullah came to Thanabovan while I studied in Kanpur. After the demise of Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), Maulana Abdullah turned towards Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh). Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) in all likelihood had considered it necessary for Maulana Abdullah Sahib to live with Maulana Khalil Sahib in r in order to attain accomplishment in tarbiyat (spiritual and moral ?Sah~ranp r, he took up residence in ?reformation). Hence, taking leave from Sah~ranp Madrasah Mazaahirul Uloom. He was appointed a mudarris at the Madrasah.

In 1337 after I had qualified at Madrasah J~miul Uloom, Kanpur, I returned to Thanabovan. Maulana Abdullah at that time was already a Mudarris at Mazaahirul Uloom. I still had to do my studies in logic and philosophy. Although Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayh) advised that I pursue my further studies at Darul Uloom Deoband, Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) had sent a message that I should proceed to Mazaahirul Uloom. Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat (rahmatullah alayh) said:

> "Since Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad Sahib has taken a special interest in you, it is best that you take Allah's Name and enter Mazaahirul Uloom."

I too desired this because Maulana Abdullah Sahib was also there and I was r.?very attached to him. Thus, Muharram 1328, I went to Sah~ranp

During that time Maulana Abdullah Sahib took me as a partner in the publication of two letters of Rasulullah (ﷺ). The one letter was written to Munthir Bin S~wi Abdi and the other to emperor Heraculeus. Each of us made a profit of 50 rupees on this joint venture. This money aided us in our Hajj journey. We had made our intention to proceed for Hajj in the company of Maulana Abdul Latief, Maulana Th~bit Ali and Molvi Faidhul Hasan ri.?Sah~ranp

Maulana Abdullah Sahib had confidence in my dreams. After completing Hajj and having arranged to proceed to Madinah Munawwarah, he asked whether I could recall the dream which I saw of Rasulullah (ﷺ) at the time I was studying Nahwmier. Maulana Abdullah Sahib reminded me that in the dream Rasulullah (ﷺ), after giving the glad tidings of Jannat, informed me that after completion of my studies I would come here to Madinah. In my dream I had replied: "I have great yearning to come. Do make duaa for me." Maulana Abdullah Sahib commented: "See, how your dream has materialized. Immediately after completing your studies you have set out for Madinah."

Along the journey to Madinah Munawwarah, I was seated on a camel and Maulana Abdullah Sahib was on another camel. On the return journey from Madinah both of us were on one camel. He said:

"You had seen a dream that both of us were journeying along the road of Makkah and Madinah, seated on one camel. Just look, how it has materialized. We both are journeying on one camel."

On returning from Hajj, Maulana Abdullah Sahib requested Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad Sahib for consent to take up a teaching post in Thanabovan. Hadhrat consented. Maulana Abdullah Sahib thus went to Thanabovan and I was appointed as a Mudarris in his place at Mazaahirul Uloom in the month of Rabiul Awwal 1329. The Kitaabs, Sharhul Wiqaayah, Noorul Anwaar, etc. which were taught by Maulana Abdullah Sahib became my responsibility.

In 1334 when Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Sahib left for Makkah and Madinah with the intention of hijrat (migration), I took leave from Mazaahirul Uloom to go to Thanabovan. When Hadhrat returned from Makkah, I too returned to Mazaahirul Uloom. However, with the permission of Hadhrat I took a post in Irshaadul Uloom at Ghari Puktah. After a stay of approximately 2½ years, I settled permanently in Thanabovan.

During the time I was in Ghari, Maulana Abdullah Sahib had taken a post in the Madrasah at Kandhlah. I could not establish the reason for this transfer. Anyhow he remained at this post, teaching until his demise there.

"Verily, we are for Allah and unto Him shall we return. May Allah forgive us and him. May He have mercy on us and him. May He grant us and him Jannat by His fadhl and rahmat."

Was-salaam."

PS. Maulana Abdullah Sahib had two sons. The name of one is Ubaidullah. I do not remember the name of the other one. I have no knowledge of his whereabouts and condition.

Some information about Maulana Abdullah Sahib may also be gained from Tadhkiratul Khalil.

20th Rabiul Awwal 1387."

The two sons of Maulana Abdullah (rahmatullah alayh) had gone to stay in the service of my uncle, Hadhrat Maulana Ily~s (rahmatullah alayh). There, they took up permanent residence. The eldest son, Molvi Hafiz Ubaidullah died a few years ago on one of the Tablighi journeys. The other son, Hafiz b. For many years he has been wondering ?In~mullah appears to be a majz from city to city and in forests. May Allah have mercy on him.

Besides this work, Ikm~lush Shiyam, he has written a variety of other well-known books. Of these, Taysirul Mubtadi and Taysirul Mantiq are the most famous. He had written Taysirul Mubtadi during his stay at Thanabovan with the express purpose of teaching it to Maulana Shabbir Ali Sahib as is mentioned in his letter. In this regard Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) writes in the introduction of Taysirul Mubradi:

> "Considering the times, it is essential to keep in mind simplicity and brevity (in methods of tuition) for the students pursuing knowledge. In this regard, this treatise which you are perusing is one such effort. The motive for compiling this treatise was a close relative beginning studies in elementary Farsi and Arabic for which a limited time was allocated.
>
> It is for this reason that I had requested my honourable associate Molvi Hafiz Muhammad Abdullah Gangohi who is presently engaged by me to teach the students, to compile in simple language a treatise consisting of a few such concise rules of Farsi and Arabic grammar, which are in common usage and which will facilitate understanding of the kitaabs which the students have to subsequently do. Molvi Sahib, in compliance with my request, devoted a portion of his precious time for this purpose and compiled the desired treatise.
>
> Purely on account of the good esteem he held me in, he submitted every word of the treatise for my scrutiny. On various occasions he accepted my advices. The benefit of this kitaab does not require any elaboration. Its benefit could be ascertained

> by teaching it to a beginner. The date of this review is 14th Thil-Hajj 1321.”

Taysirul Mantiq was written (by Maulana Abdullah Sahib) during his stay in Kandhlah. In the introduction of this treatise, Maulana mentions:

> “In this age, the ability of the students has become very weak. Mantiq is a knowledge which is related only to the intellect and understanding. For this reason, generally there is very little affinity with it. Furthermore, all the laws of Mantiq (Logic) are either in Farsi or Arabic. Thus, the essential laws of Mantiq have been translated into Urdu. This compilation has been named Taysirul Mantiq. This treatise was presented for checking to Hadhrat Maulana Siddique Ahmad Sahib, the Mufti of Malir Kotla and Khalifah of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). He was also the patron and examiner of the primary classes at Darul
> r. This ʔUloom Deoband and Mazaahirul Uloom Sah~ranp
> treatise was completed on 25th Thil-Hajj 1336.”

According to the records of the Madrasah, Hadhrat Maulana Al-H~j Abdullah Sahib Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) was appointed at Mazaahirul Uloom on 12th Shawwaal 1328. During the month Shawwaal 1329, he accompanied the seniors of the Madrasah for Hajj. After returning from the journey, he was in the service of the Madrasah for one month and twenty four days.

After serving this period, as far as I can remember, he stayed for some time in Thanabovan. He then proceeded to Kandhlah. According to the letter of Maulana Shabbir Ali Sahib, he (Maulana Abdullah) went directly from
r to Kandhlah.ʔSah~ranp

Maulana Shabbir Ali is three years older than me. He also lived in Thanabovan. His memory is, therefore, more reliable. However, Maulana Zafar Ahmad who is two years older than Maulana Shabbir Ali wrote that
r to Thanabovan. Be that ʔMaulana Abdullah Sahib proceeded from Sah~ranp

as it may. The fact remains that he went to Kandhlah at the insistence of its ri (rahmatullah alayh).?people and on the instruction of Hadhrat Sah~ranp

As a result of Maulana Abdullah’s settling in Kandhlah the existing Madrasah progressed immensely. He continued to teach until the end of his stay. He lived with his family in the town in a rented house. On 15th Rajab, 1329 (26 March 1921) on a Saturday night, he passed away in Kandhlah. He was buried in our ancestral qabrustan which is adjacent to the Eid Gah. In this qabrustan lie interred Hadhrat Mufti Il~hi Bakhsh (rahmatullah alayh) as well as other senior Ulama and Mash~-ikh.

Whatever Maulana Zafar Ahmad and Maulana Shabbir Ali have said regarding his style of teaching is absolutely correct. His style was the influence of the style of teaching of my father, Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Yahya Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) who was a true mujtahid in his teaching style, especially in the elementary stage. He would teach every student according to his ability with methods he invented. He accorded considerable emphasis to revision and practice in the elementary rules of grammar. He loved to teach the elementary kitaabs. He repeatedly requested the Madrasah authorities to allow him to teach the primary classes, saying that others are available to teach Hadith. This influence extended over all his students, hence Maulana Abdullah Sahib was so eager to teach the primary class. He did not have the same enthusiasm for teaching the higher kitaabs.

My uncle, Maulana Muhammad Ily~s (rahmatullah alayh) also took great care in teaching the elementary kitaabs.

It was the opinion of my honourable father (Maulana Muhammad Yahya) that a fully qualified Molvi should never be engaged to teach the primary classes. His view was that intelligent students, after completing Sharah Jaami and Mukhtasarul Ma-aani, should be appointed to teach the primary classes. He would often say: “A fully qualified Molvi will always be concerned with his own progress. He will, therefore, not pay much attention to the small (primary) books. On the other hand, whoever has not studied the higher kitaabs will not be concerned with further progress.”

Itm~mun Ni'am

Ikm~lush Shiyam is the sharah (commentary and explanation) of Itm~mun Ni'am which was written by my Shaikh and Murshid, Hadhrat Maulana Al-H~j Khalil Ahmad Sahib Muhaajir-e-Madani. Itm~mun Ni'am in turn is the Urdu translation of Tabweebul Hikam. This translation was executed by Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad on the instruction of Hadhrat Al-H~j Imd~dullah (rahmatullah alayh). However, Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad did not designate a name for the translation.

After completing the translation he handed it to Hadhrat Hakimul Ummat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) for printing. On the instruction of Hadhrat Haji Sahib (rahmatullah alayh), Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) was the first to publish the book. He named it Itm~mun Ni'am. This is stated by Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) himself in his review which will appear later.

ri ?Itm~mun Ni'am was written at the time when Hadhrat Sah~ranp (Maulana Khalil Ahmad) was a mudarris (teacher) at Darul Uloom Deoband. r. Thus, he ?This was prior to his engagement at Mazaahirul Uloom Sah~ranp wrote at the end of Itm~mun Ni'am:

> "This translation was accomplished on 12th Ramadhaan 1313 Hijri, after Jumuah Salaat in Musjid Mahallah Khanqah, in the r."?town of Deoband, Dist. Sah~ranp

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بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

PREFACE

(Hakimul Ummat Maulana Ashraf Ali Th~nvi)

“All praises are for Allah, the Bestower of bounties and the Limitless in grace and kindness. Peace and blessings on His Rasool, Muhammad who was given the best of laws, (and peace and blessings) on his family and his companions who were the fountains of wisdom.

Subhaanallah! The love and concern of the accepted servants of Allah are indeed wonderful. Night and day they think of ways to deliver benefit to the servants of Allah. In fact, these are the illustrious souls to whom reference is made in the aayat:

"You are the best of nations, having been raised for mankind..."

These noble men in fact represent the tafseer of this aayat. One of these illustrious and august souls is our Hadhrat and Murshid, Maulana Sayyiduna Al-H~j Al-Hafiz Shah Muhammad Imd~dullah. One of the effects of his love and concern (for the Ummah) is the publication of beneficial kitaabs. He was responsible for the translation, writing and publication of such kitaabs.

Among these beneficial and essential books, is a book known by the designation: Hikam-e-Jaami Irshaadaat-e-Qutbul Waqt Hujjatullah Hadhrat Ibn At~ Iskandari who is the author of Tanweer Fi Isqaatillah. Truly, the spiritual effect and roohaani style of tarbiyat (moral training) which exude from the words of this buzrug are seldom to be found in the words of others. Regarding its exotic beauty and esoteric excellence, it needs no description.

However, on account of the subject matter being scattered, a reader would find it difficult as a reference. Thus, Shaikh Ali Muttaqi arranged the topics of this work in a very beautiful and systematic order. This systematic

arrangement became known by the name: An-Nahjul Atam Fi Tabweebil Hikam. For the benefit of the people of Hind (India), Hadhrat Sayyiduna Haji Imd~dullah (rahmatullah alayh) instructed Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad Sahib, former mudarris at Darul Uloom Deoband and presently a mudarris at Madrasah Islaamiyah, to translate this kitaab. Subsequently, Maulana Khalil Ahmad translated it in very simple language and in elaborate form full of meaning. In accordance with his instructions, he handed the translation to me for printing.

Purely out of supreme humility the honourable translator did not give a name to his translation, leave alone mentioning his name. I have, therefore, named it, Itm~mun Ni'am – Tarjumah Tabweebul Hikam. My beloved and honourable benefactor who is an embodiment of virtue and grace, Hafiz Muhammad Abu Sa-eed Kh~n Sahib, the muhtamim of Niz~mi Printers, voluntarily, enthusiastically and with utmost sincerity arranged for the printing which was beautifully executed. Thus, by having the book printed, he bestowed spiritual light to the eyes and pleasure to the hearts of the devotees.

After numerous dives into the depths of the ocean, this priceless pearl was finally brought to the surface.

The Author of Itmaamun Ni'am

The biography of Hadhrat Aqdas Maulana Khalil Ahmad Muhaajir-e-Madani has been narrated by Hadhrat Maulana }shiq Il~hi Sahib in Tazkaratul Khalil. A brief explanation of his life-story has also been given by me in the introduction of Sharah Muatta, Aujaz.

Hadhrat Qudwatus Saalikeen, Zubtatul }rifeen, Haafizul Qur'aan wal Hadith, Al-H~j Abu Ibr~him Khalil Ahmad, the son of Shah Majeed Ali, the son of Shah Ahmad Ali, the son of Shah Qutub Ali Al-Ayyubi Al-Ans~ri r towards the ?Ambhetwi was born in Ambhetwi in the district of Sah~ranp end of Safar 1269 Hijri.

He studied the primary Urdu and Farsi text books by his paternal uncle, Shaikh Ans~ri Ali Sahib as well as other local Ulama. Thereafter, he went to his father in Gawaliar. Hadhrat provides this information himself in his writings which will follow later. In 1283 Hijri when the foundation of Darul Uloom Deoband was cast, he entered the Madrasah. However, in the same r. The ?year the foundations of Mazaahirul Uloom were laid in Sah~ranp maternal uncle of Hadhrat Maulana Khalil (rahmatullah alayh), Maulana Muhammad Mazhar Nanotwi Sahib was appointed the Chief Mudarris. He was also the Khalifah of Hadhrat Qutb-e-}lam Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). With the appointment of Maulana Muhammad Mazhar, Maulana Khalil r that very year.?Ahmad left Deoband and came to Sah~ranp

At this time, Hadhrat Maulana Khalil was studying Kaafiyah, etc. He r and was appointed a mudarris at ?completed the whole course in Sah~ranp the same Madrasah at a wage of three rupees per month. This was the year 1288 Hijri. His age was 19 at the time. He thus attained his qualifications in all branches of academic (Deen) knowledge within five years after Kaafiyah.

However, he was very enthusiastic about gaining higher qualifications in Ilm-e-Adab (Arabic literature). He, therefore, proceeded to Lahore after

r. At the time in Lahore, ?having been appointed as a mudarris at Sah~ranp Maulana Faidhul Hasan Sahib was the famous expert in the Knowledge of Adab. He was, in fact, the Shaarih (commentator) of Muallaqah, Hamaasah and Mutanabbi.

This humble one had himself posed many questions to Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Sahib regarding his employment. Out of his affection, Hadhrat would always provide answers. Some of my writings in this regard were in the custody of Hadhrat Maulana }shiq Il~hi (rahmatullah alayh). He had narrated most of these in Tazharatul Khalil in his own words.

At this juncture, I wish to present a statement of Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Sahib (rahmatullah alayh). On the 23rd Jamadil Ula 1240, I enquired from Hadhrat if he had studied all his Kitaabs at this Madrasah. In reply he said:

“My father was employed in Gawaliar. My paternal uncle, Ans~r Ali, too was somewhere nearby. Coincidentally, he too came to Gawaliar. He commenced teaching me Arabic. At the time when I began Arabic, I was studying Bostaan (Farsi).

After beginning Arabic studies, when I completed Sarfmeer and Panj Ganj, my father left his employment and went to Ambheta. I too accompanied him. There was no proper arrangement or Madrasah in Ambheta. Nevertheless, while I was superficially studying Kaafiyah and reached Sharah Jaami, the foundations of the Madrasah in Deoband were laid.”

In answer to another question which I asked on 12th Rabiul Awwal 1344, Hadhrat replied:

“In Ambheta was a Buzrug, Maulana Sakh~wat Ali Sahib who was an ardent follower of the Sunnah. In following the Sunnah he was very, very strict and harsh. Prior to my admission to the Madrasah of Deoband, I had studied some primary Kitaabs by this Buzrug.

Brother Molvi Abdullah, Brother Molvi Siddique Ahmad and myself took admission to the Madrasah in Deoband. Although we had completed until b (rahmatullah alayh) arranged for us to be ?Sharah Jaami, Maulana Yaq admitted to Kaafiyah.

Six months later on 1st Rajab 1283 Hijri, the foundations of Mazaahirul Uloom were laid. Since I could not adapt to the climatic conditions of Deoband, I took admission in Mazaahirul Uloom. Maulana Mazhar (rahmatullah alayh) informed that at the Madrasah there was no class for Sharah Jaami, hence he admitted me to Mukhasarul Ma'aani."

After returning from Lahore, Hadhrat, himself said:

"I went to Lahore and stayed there a few months. After studying Maqaamaat and Muhanabbi by Maulana Faidhul Hasan (rahmatullah alayh), I returned to b (rahmatullah alayh) arranged for me to be ?Deoband. Hadhrat Maulana Yaq employed to translate Qaamoos into Urdu. The wage was ten rupees per month. I was sent to a mountain to execute this duty. After about two months I returned."

Thereafter he was sent as a mudarris to the Madrasah of Hadhrat Manglore (Tazkaratur Rashid, Vol. 1). It was during this time that Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) entered into the Bay't of Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). The episode of his bay't is explained at the end of this treatise.

During the same time an offer of employment from Bhopal came for b (rahmatullah alayh) for a salary of 300 rupees a ?Hadhrat Maulana Yaq month. Much pressure was put on him to accept this offer. However, inspite of him earning at that time 30 rupees per month, he declined the offer. He was then pressed to sent another reliable person to take up the post. Hadhrat b (rahmatullah alayh) sent his nephew, Hadhrat Maulana Khalil ?Maulana Yaq Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh). Thus, by the choice of his honourable uncle and on the approval of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), he left during the

year 1293 Hijri to take up the post in Bhopal at the salary of 50 rupees per month.

His residence was in the mansion of Madaarul Mahaam and every arrangement was made for his comfort and wants. However, the flood of spiritual effulgence which he experienced in the former place (viz. r/Deoband) was lacking here (in Bhopal). Furthermore, the ?Sah~ranp ri (rahmatullah ?weather did not agree with him. Maulana Khalil Sah~ranp alayh), therefore handed in his resignation to his Shaikh, Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) and requested permission to return. The reply which Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) wrote is recorded in Tazkaratul Khalil. It is reproduced here.

> "Brother Molvi Khalil Ahmad Sahib: May your fuyoodh (spiritual grace and benefit) endure for a long time. Your letter was received today. In view of the weather there not agreeing with you, your return is necessary. Relocating on account of the weather is confirmed by the Hadith. However, since it involves livelihood, the matter is somewhat delicate. Therefore, until alternate arrangements are not made, leaving is not appropriate. It is, therefore, advisable to stay there for a while. You were much in demand in Muraadabaad. However, Molvi Abdul Haq ri has now taken up the post there, but he is unable to fulfil ?P his duties as are required. If it becomes advisable, I shall endeavour (to acquire a post for you) there or elsewhere. I shall inform you after arrangements are made, Insha'Allah.
> 18th Rabiul Awwal 1293 Hijri."

In accordance with the instructions of Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), he (Maulana Khalil) stayed on in Bhopal until the Hajj season dawned. The urge to go for Hajj became over-powering. Hadhrat Maulana Khalil was granted leave and he also received a few months salary in advance. Although this money was not sufficient, his enthusiasm impelled him to proceed. This episode is described in detail in Tazkaratul Khalil.

On reaching Makkah Mukarramah, he presented himself at the house of Hadhrat Haji Imd~dullah (rahmatullah alayh). The pleasure of anwaar-e-baatiniyyah (spiritual light) there was most wonderful. This was the first Hajj of Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh). It has been discussed in great detail in Tazkaratul Khalil.

After completing Hajj, his intention was to proceed to Madinah Munawwarah. However, the road to Madinah was dangerous. Even those people who had already commenced the journey to Madinah were returning because of the danger. Anarchy, strife and killing were rampant. Hadhrat Haji Sahib said:

> "Molvi Khalil Ahmad, what is your intention? I have heard the Hujjaaj are returning home in large numbers on account of the danger and unsafety of the road to Madinah."

Maulana Khalil Ahmad replied:

> "Hadhrat, I have firmly resolved to go to Madinah Tayyibah. The appointed time of maut cannot be delayed anywhere. If it comes in this road (to Madinah), what greater fortune does a man wish for? It is by the grace of Allah Ta'ala that he has brought me thus far. If now, I abandon the journey to Madinah on account of the fear for death, then who can be more unfortunate than me?"

Hadhrat Haji Sahib's face brightened up with pleasure, and he commented:

> "Enough! Enough! For you the advice is that you should certainly go. Insha'Allah, you will reach."

Thus, Hadhrat Maulana Khalil took leave and set out for Madinah Munawwarah. He said:

"Only I know of the great peace and comfort I experienced along the journey. I stayed about two weeks in the sacred precincts and reached home safely."

In this journey, Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) received authorisation in Hadith from Shaikhul Haram Maulana Shaikh Ahmad Dahl~n and from Shaikhul Mash~-ikh Hadhrat Shah Abdul Ghani Mujaddidi Naqshabandi Dehlawi who had taken up residence in Madinah. This is recorded in detail in the beginning of Musalsalaat. The authorisation from Shaikh Ahmad Dahl~n was acquired in Makkah Mukarramah while that of Hadhrat Shah Abdul Ghani was obtained in Madinah Munawwarah after Hajj in the year 1294.

After returning from Hajj, Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) had no intention of returning to Bhopal because the weather conditions there were not favourable. After staying a few days in his hometown, Ambheta, he left in Jamaadil Ula 1294 for Sikander~b~d in the district of Balandshahr where he took up a post as mudarris in Madrasah Arabiya Jaami' Musjid.

However, here the people of Bid'ah vehemently opposed him. They left no stone unturned to harm him, hence he sought permission from Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) to return. However, Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) refused permission and wrote the following letter:

"Molvi Khalil Ahmad Sahib, Assalaamu Alaikum warahmatullah wa barakatuhu!

Your letter has been received and contents noted. Do not permit the latest developments to alarm you. In this world occur events which please and displease. Continue with your mission. If the opponent is bent on harming you, then know that the Supporter is protecting you.

As far as possible do not resort to abandonment.… It is better to keep all happy. Perhaps it will prove beneficial. Allah Ta'ala said:
"Thus, because of the mercy of Allah, you are affectionate towards them."

However, there is no hope that this sect (viz. Ahl-e-Bid'ah) will become pleased, especially when they are exhorted by their lecturers (to oppose you).

Was-salaam.
Friday, 16 Jamadith Thaani 1294

However , despite the affection and affability shown by Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Sahib, the intransigence of the people there went on increasing, hence with the permission of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), he handed in his resignation and returned.

In that very year, 1294 in the month of Shawwaal an august group consisting of the Akaabir of Hindustan departed for Hajj. In this group were the illustrious stars of Knowledge and Piety, viz. Hadhrat Gangohi, Hadhrat b ?Nanotwi, Hadhrat Maulana Mazhar, Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Yaq (Chief Mudarris of Darul Uloom Deoband) as well as other senior Ulama. ri (Maulana Khalil – rahmatullah alayh) had a ?Although Hadhrat Sah~ranp great desire and wish to accompany this august caravan of seniors, Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) did not consent on account of some difficulties regarding travelling arrangements, moreover, because Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Sahib had just returned from Hajj. This illustrious group returned from Hajj in the month of Rabiul Awwal 1295.

On their return, a letter from Molvi Shamsuddin, Chief Justice of b Sahib. The letter was a ?Bhawalpur was awaiting Maulana Muhammad Yaq request for a very highly qualified Ustaad. Many qualities were stipulated in the letter. The Ustaad had to be a young man, extremely intelligent, an expert in all branches of Knowledge an embodiment of virtue and character who

b (rahmatullah ?could be an exemplar for students, etc. Hadhrat Maulana Yaq
alayh) selected Maulana Khalil Ahmad for this post.

Hadhrat would often say that he had declined the offer, saying that he was
b (rahmatullah ?not adequately qualified. However, Maulana Muhammad Yaq
alayh) said:

> "The Ahl-e-Ilm (the Ulama) usually consider themselves in this way (i.e. that they are not adequately qualified). You consider yourself unqualified because you still have your seniors above you. However, when you go outside you will not find anyone as qualified as yourself."

b (rahmatullah ?Finally, by the unanimous opinion of Hadhrat Maulana Yaq
alayh) and Hadhrat Maulana Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) took up the post in Bhawalpur for a monthly salary of 30 rupees.

While he was in Bhawalpur, he undertook his second Hajj journey which he, himself describes in his Bayaadh. This journey is also described in Tazkaratul Khalil. It took place in the month of Shawwaal 1297. The year 1296 mentioned in Tazkaratur Rashid is a printing error.

It was on this blessed journey that Hadhrat Haji Imd~dullah (rahmatullah
ri (rahmatullah ?alayh) bestowed the mantle of Khilaafat to Hadhrat Sah~ranp
alayh) and presented him his mubarak amaamah (turban). This is mentioned in the second volume of Tazkaratur Rashid as follows:

> "When the honourable Maulana went on Hajj the second time to Makkah Muazzamah, Imaam-e-Rabb~ni (Maulana Gangohi) wrote to Haji Sahib (Haji Imd~dullah) requesting him to confer the mantle of Khilaafat to Molvi Khalil Ahmad Sahib.

On seeing Maulana, Hadhrat Haji Sahib became extremely happy. During Muharram 1297 he presented the document of Khilaafat adorned with his seal and in a state of elation he removed his blessed turban from his head and placed it on Maulana’s head.

The honourable Maulana presented both gifts to Imaam-e-Rabb~ni and said:
‘I am not deserving of these. This is only your affection and grace for me.’

Hadhrat Gangohi replied:
‘May these be blessed for you.’

He then signed the Khilaafat Naamah (Document of Khilaafat) and handed if together with the turban to Maulana Sahib. The respect of Maulana Khalil was such that whenever he would initiate (make bay’t) a Mureed, he would instruct him (the Mureed), after having made taubah for past sins to say:
‘I have made bay’t to Hadhrat Maulana Rashid Ahmad Sahib on the hands of Khalil Ahmad.’ ”

In this narrative, the date Muharram 1297 is a printing error. Hadhrat’s departure for Hajj was in Shawwaal 1297.

The turban mentioned above, is the same blessed turban which Hadhrat ri (rahmatullah alayh) presented to my father, Hadhrat Maulana ?Sah~ranp Muhammad Yahya Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) on the occasion of the bestowal of the mantle of Khilaafat to him. This episode is narrated by Maulana }shiq Il~hi Sahib in Tazkaratul Khalil. He writes:

“Molvi Muhammad Yayha Sahib marhoom was my benefactor and sincere friend. His hidden excellences and auspicious states require a separate volume. After all, he must have been a somebody for Imaam-e-Rabb~ni to love more than his own

offspring. Hadhrat Rabb~ni (i.e. Maulana Gangohi) often said that he was the staff of old age and the eyes of the blind.

Occasionally if he (Maulana Muhammad Yahya) would disappear for a few minutes for some work, Imaam-e-Rabb~ni would become perturbed and restless. He spent twelve years in such love and affection which cannot be explained. This endured until the demise of Hadhrat Imaam-e-Rabb~ni.

Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) whose foresight had discerned the worth and value of Maulana Muhammad Yahya twelve years ago, went specially to Gangoh to present the turban which Murshidul Arab wal Ajam (i.e. Hadhrat Haji Imd~dullah) had presented to him. On this occasion while placing the mubarak amaamah on Maulana Muhammad Yahya's head with his blessed hand, he said: 'You are deserving of this. Until this day I was its protector and trustee. Alhamdulillah! Today, I have handed the haq (right) to the rightful one and am now relieved of the responsibility of this amaanat (trust). I authorise you to initiate any seeker into the four Silsilahs and to show him the Name of Allah.' "

The third and all subsequent Hajj journeys of Hadhrat Maulana Khalil r. The third ?Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) were undertaken from Sah~ranp Hajj was after the heart-rending demise of Hadhrat Qutub-e-}lam Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). Consolation for the immense grief which he suffered as a result of this event could be obtained only from his presence at the Holy Grave of Rasulullah (ﷺ).

His fourth Hajj was in 1328. In this year Hadhrat Aqdas Shah Abdur Raheem (rahmatullah alayh) went for Hajj accompanied by a large group of ri ?his khuddaam (mureeds) and companions. Hadhrat Sah~ranp ri (i.e. Hadhrat Abdur Raheem) as far as ?accompanied Hadhrat Aqdas Raip Delhi. On his return from Delhi, Janab Shah Z~hid Husain Sahib of Bahat ri to also proceed for Hajj. He then said that ?prevailed on Hadhrat Sah~ranp

he too would accompany Hadhrat. Perhaps this insistence was the effect of the yearning and enthusiasm which overwhelmed the heart of Hadhrat ri ?ri as a consequence of the departure of Hadhrat Raip?Sah~ranp (rahmatullah alayh). Hence, he accepted the offer after much pressure was brought on him to do so by Shah Z~hid Husain Sahib. Thus, he departed r during the middle of Thil Qa'dh and reached Makkah ?from Sah~ranp Mukarramah on 6th Thil Hajj.

After Hajj he went to Madinah Munawwarah via the route of Yamboo'. r at the end of Safar 1329.?He stayed 22 days there. He returned to Sah~ranp

The fifth Hajj was a momentous occasion which took place in Shawwaal 1332 in the company of Hadhrat Shaikhul Hind (rahmatullah alayh). However, he did not obtain the companionship of Hadhrat Shaikhul Hind (rahmatullah alayh) from the beginning of the journey. However, a week before the journey, four illustrious personalities gathered for top-secret discussions in the library of Mazaahirul Uloom. These august personalities ri, Hadhrat Shaikhul Hind, Hadhrat Aqdas Shah ?were Hadhrat Sah~ranp ri ?ri and Maulana Al-H~j Hakeem Ahmad R~mp?Abdur Raheem Raip (rahmatullah alayhim). No one else besides these four was allowed to participate in the talks.

For a full week these discussions continued in privacy. Daily after Ishraaq Salaat, they would go into privacy. At midday word would repeatedly come ri to announce that meals were ready ?from the home of Hadhrat Sah~ranp while these four would reply, "We are coming." They would descend from upstairs just before Zuhr Athaan and after quickly having their meals, perform Zuhr Salaat, then immediately seclude themselves to continue their talks until after the Athaan of Asr. After Asr there would be no majlis (gathering at which Deeni instruction was imparted). However, sometimes after Maghrib there would be a majlis.

Everyone was curious to know what transpired at such lengthy and secret talks which lasted for a whole week, but no one had any inkling.

At the time, I was a child. I would ask every senior about these talks. My father had some idea what these discussions were about. He, therefore, made some allusions which would satisfy my curiosity.

During the absence of Hadhrat Shaikhul Hind (rahmatullah alayh), the ri (rahmatullah ?responsibility of his duties was assumed by Hadhrat Raip alayh).

Although these personalities held high aspirations *(this is a reference to their Jihaad Plan for unshackling India from British imperialism – Translator),* Allah’s Decree did not permit their attainment.

In Makkah, on account of the excess and oppression of Shareef Husain (the ri was compelled to return ?Turkish governor of Hij~z), Hadhrat Sah~ranp before Hajj during Shawwaal 1334, while Hadhrat Aqdas Shaikhul Hind (rahmatullah alayh) was imprisoned and exiled to Malta (by the British government).

ri ?Although in Tazkaratul Khalil it is mentioned that Hadhrat Sah~ranp returned from this journey in Shawwaal, he in fact departed from Makkah Mukarramah at the end of Shawwaal and his ship reached Bombay on 8th Thil Qa’dh. As he disembarked from the ship he was handed the telegram announcing the demise of my honourable father, Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Yahya (rahmatullah alayh). This news aggravated the grief he suffered as a result of the difficult events which transpired in the year of his residency in Makkah Mukarramah.

To compound all this, as he alighted from the ship, he along with his wife and brother, Haji Maqbool Ahmad Sahib who was Hadhrat’s right-hand man, were taken into custody. The three together with their luggage were taken to Nanit~l. The episode of their prolonged interrogation which lasted several days in quite lengthy. Finally, they were freed.

r on 2nd ?His sixth Hajj took place in 1338. He left from Sah~ranp Sha'baan. I too accompanied him on this journey. There was some delay in Bombay regarding embarkation because the retinue of Hadhrat's companions was approximately 300 and Hadhrat disliked to embark without all his companions. Two ships sailed without them since passage for the entire group was not available on any one of these. Tickets for the entire group were purchased well in advance for the journey on a third ship.

Those were very difficult days in Bombay where it was extremely difficult for Deobandis to live publicly. Some sincere friends had, therefore, arranged accommodation for the group in a tent pitched in the veld on the outskirts. Finally, they reached Makkah Mukarramah on the 11th of Ramadhaanul Mubarak.

Inspite of Hadhrat's weakness and dizziness as a result of the ship's rocking, he himself conducted the Taraaweeh Salaat while standing. He would recite half Juz in 8 raka'ts and another quarter Juz in the remaining 12 raka'ts was recited by me. On reaching Makkah Mukarramah, Hadhrat performed Taraaweeh behind a highly qualified Qaari who recited two Juz nightly. This recitation was from the beginning. In addition, Hadhrat would recite his own Qur'aan in Nafl Salaat.

When Hadhrat reached Makkah Mukarramah, Hadhrat Maulana Muhibbuddin Muh~jir-e-Makki who was among the Khulafaa of Hadhrat Haji Imd~dullah (rahmatullah alayh), and who was a great Saahib-e-Kashf (one who receives Divine Inspiration), while embracing him (Hadhrat ri) said:?Sah~ranp

> "Maulana, why have you come here? The greater Qiyaamah is about to be enacted here. Return immediately to Hindustan after Ramadhaan."

Hadhrat said to us (his companions):

> "It was my intention to take up residence in Madinah Tayyibah, but Maulana Muhibbuddin Sahib vehemently forbids it. I have already visited Madinah Tayyibah several times. Since this is your first Hajj and it is not known if you will again get this opportunity, therefore, proceed to Madinah."

The times were so unsafe and dangerous that before Hajj some people would hazard the trip to Madinah and after Hajj a very few would venture to Madinah. Neither life nor property was safe.

The government of Shareef Husain had no control beyond the confines of Makkah. Killing and plundering were rampant. Only three-day visas were granted to stay in Madinah Tayyibah. If anyone wished to stay more than three days, a daily fee of one guinea (gold coin) had to be paid to the Bedouin in charge of the caravan. But this extended stay was possible only with the consent of the Bedouin.

A few of us khuddaam (servants/companions), with the blessings of Hadhrat and the mercy and grace of Allah, finally reached Madinah Tayyibah, travelling clandestinely, initially along the coast, then through the valleys of Mount Ghaa-ir. The story of this journey is indeed long and interesting.

One of the manifestations of the innumerable bounties and grace of Allah Ta'ala, which have always been with this humble one *(Hadhrat Shaikh Zakariyya – Translator)*, was that instead of three days, I was able to stay 40 days in Madinah Tayyibah. This is truly an example of the bounties stated in the Qur'aanic aayat:

> "And, if you count the bounties of Allah, never will you be able to enumerate them."

On reaching Madinah, one of the camels of our caravan died on account of sheer exhaustion. Neither did the jammaal (owner of the camel) have sufficient funds to purchase another mount, nor did we possess enough money to advance a loan with which another camel could be purchased.

ri had calculated our expenses for the journey and for a ?Hadhrat Sah~ranp three-day stay in Madinah. Thus, we were given sufficient money only for this. The rest of our funds were left in the safe custody of the trader, Haji Ali J~n.

Whenever the jammaal would ask us for a loan to enable him to purchase a camel, we would ask him for a loan to buy food, saying that we had made arrangements for only three days. May Allah Ta'ala grant him a good reward. The poor man repeatedly presented excuses for the delay. When one of our associates would sometimes complain to the Ameer of Madinah, he too would apologise and instruct us to be patient. He would also threaten the Bedouin (in charge of our caravan).

The stay of this journey is very interesting and wonderful. But, it is not my intention to write my autobiography here. I have simply digressed from my topic and wrote these few lines.

ri. Hadhrat reached ?After Hajj we returned with Hadhrat Sah~ranp r during Safar 1339.?Sah~ranp

The seventh Hajj was the journey in which Hadhrat bid a final farewell to Hindustan. On the insistence of the Khuddam of Hyderabad, it was arranged for Hadhrat to stay over, one week in Hyderabad. The departure from r for Hyderabad was on 16th Shawwaal 1344.?Sah~ranp

It was also agreed that I accompany Hadhrat as far as Hyderabad. However, at the station, precisely at the moment of departure after taking up seats, it was discovered that Hadhrat's main item of luggage was left behind in his room. This suitcase contained all his amaanaat (items of trust) as well as the funds for the journey. I, therefore, had to return as the train departed. I reached Hyderabad the next day with Hadhrat's suitcase.

After staying about a week in Hyderabad, Hadhrat left for Bombay. According to plan, the rest of the companions together with Ammajee (his

r directly for Bombay on the 23rd Shawwaal while ?wife) left from Sah~ranp Hadhrat departed from Hyderabad at 9 a.m. on Saturday 25th Shawwaal. He reached Bombay on Sunday morning.

From Bombay, the ship sailed on the 7th Thil Qa'dh. The ship docked on the 17th at Kamr~n, and sailed from there on the 18th, reaching Jiddah on the 21st. From Jiddah the journey to Makkah Mukarramah was by camels. The party reached Makkah Mukarramah on the 25th.

Hadhrat had rented a house in a narrow street opposite Baab-e-Ibr~him. Hadhrat together with three or four Khaadims stayed in this house.

On the 8th we left for Mina. Hadhrat and Ammajee were on one camel. Some other close companions were nearby on other camels. Some of us, Khuddaam, walked on foot alongside Hadhrat's camel. In Mina we stayed in the tent of the Mutawwif. One tent was for the ladies, in which Ammajee and a khaadimah (female companion) stayed. In another tent, Hadhrat and we, the khuddaam stayed. After completing the Hajj, the stay in Makkah Mukarramah was for a few days. It was then decided to proceed to Madinah. On the 22nd Thil Hajj, tabrez started. A few camels at a time would leave and stop over at Jarwal.

Tabrez is a well-known practice associated with travel by camel-caravan. The caravan halts for a night about a mile or two outside Makkah. The purpose for this halt is to enable people to return to Makkah to bring any goods or persons left behind. The actual journey commences after this halt at Tabrez. Nowadays, in view of motor transport, people are no longer aware of the practice of Tabrez.

The departure was planned for the 24th, but the government confiscated 23 camels. This resulted in a delay of two days. Therefore, we left two days later after Asr Salaat at 9 o' clock Arabic time from Jarwal. Some had left and performed Asr Salaat in Tan'eem. At 6 o' clock, Arabic time, we reached W~di F~timah where there were many orchards of very tall date trees. There was also a small stream of very sweet water. We bathed in the stream and ate of the dates.

From here we left at Zuhr on Thursday and reached Asf~n on Friday morning at 12 o' clock, Arabic time. The camels of the caravan trailed in until 2 o' clock, Arabic time. Here was a well. It is said that the saliva of Rasulullah (ﷺ) had mingled in the water of this well. Here were many scattered date trees. There were no orchards. There were also several wells, the water of which was very sweet. Dates, fowls, goats and sheep were in abundance and very cheap.

We left Asf~n at 8 o' clock Arabic time. We accomplished the long and arduous mountain climb before Maghrib and reached Daf at 6 o' clock Arabic time on Saturday night. However, on account of the steep mountain climb, the camels trailed in until 9 o' clock at night. Here too, dates were in abundance. Delicious bread was being sold very cheaply. Milk too, was available in abundance.

We departed from here after Asr Salaat and reached Qadeemah on Sunday morning at 9 o' clock Arabic time. Qadeemah was a big town where government offices, officials and police were much in view. The different routes from Makkah converged here. Also, those coming from Jiddah would converge here.

There was a shortage of water and the available water was brack.

After Zuhr Salaat at 6 o' clock, we left and reached R~bigh at 2 o' clock Arabic time in the morning on Monday. R~bigh was quite a big city. However, on account of war between the Najdis and Shareef, the city was destroyed and desolate. Nevertheless, there was a market-place catering for needs. Some traders here performed a postal service. For a fee would they deliver letters for Yamboo and Jiddah to the post office. All caravans stopped here compulsorily for one night.

We departed from R~bigh Tuesday evening after Asr at 9 o' clock Arabic
rah on Wednesday morning at 12 o' clock. Generally, ?time and reached Mast all the wells were very brack. Whatever was cooked with this well-water also became bitter. However, with the barkat of Hadhrat we located very sweet

water. It was learnt that the government had just recently dug a few wells from which sweet water was obtainable by the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. This water was sweeter than the water of even R~bigh and Qadeemah.

Wednesday evening at 9 o' clock after Asr we departed and reached Bir-e-Shaikh on Thursday morning at 11 o' clock Arabic time. Although there existed a market-place, milk was not available.

After Asr we left and reached Bir-e-Banil Hass~n on Friday at the time of Sahri. This place was also called Bir-e-Shaikh Abdullah at the time. It is said that Hass~n was a famous chief who had seven children. He was very wealthy. This settlement is named after him. Several roads from here lead to Madinah Tayyibah. Some caravans accomplish this journey in three manzils (halts), while others do it in four manzils.

The caravan of Hadhrat left Bir-e-Hass~n on Friday after Zuhr Salaat and reached Ghals on Saturday morning, leaving again after Zuhr Salaat. On Sunday morning the caravan reached Fareesh. The various caravans had all gathered here.

From Fareesh we left during the evening of Sunday and reached Madinah Munawwarah (May Allah increase it in dignity and honour) on Monday at the time of Chaasht. If Thil Qa'dh had 30 days, then the date on this day would have been the 8th Muharram and if Thil Qa'dh had 29 days, the date would be the 9th Muharram. Azeezul Hasan Kandhalwi Marhoom whose camel had separated from our caravan, halting at other places, writes in his Biyaadh that the date of arrival in Madinah Tayyibah was the 19th July, Monday morning. In Taqweemul }m, the date of arrival is said to be the 19th July corresponding with the 8th Muharram on Tuesday. However, in Arabia a difference of a day in the dates is common, hence the 19th July corresponds with the 8th Muharram (Tuesday) in Arabia.

Hadhrat Aqdas Maulana Al-H~j Sayyid Ahmad (the elder brother of Shaikhul Isl~m Hadhrat Maulana Sayyid Husain Ahmad Madani (rahmatullah alayh) had rented a house in Madrasah Shariyyah Qadeem. Qadeem is mentioned here in relation to the present new building which was erected as

a consequence of the great changes and re-development schemes during the Saudi regime. The old (qadeem) Madrasah building was a very simple and appealing structure. Its main portal was located on the main road facing B~bun Nis~. The small door was on the southern side opening into a narrow street.

The ground floor of this house was taken up by Hadhrat Maulana Sayyid
ri occupied the second floor where he ?Ahmad Sahib. Hadhrat Sah~ranp wrote the kitaab, Bazlul Majhood. The third floor was occupied by the females of Hadhrat Maulana Sayyid Ahmad. Adjacent to this, towards the
ri's females.?side of B~bun Nis~ was the residence of the Hadhrat Sah~ranp

ri (rahmatullah alayh) would go ?After Ishraaq Salaat, Hadhrat Sah~ranp
to the room where he would write his kitaab and remain there for a few hours in complete solitude engrossed in writing Bazlul Majhood. He would thereafter have his meals in the same room. The food of Hadhrat would come from his home and from upstairs would come the food of Hadhrat Maulana Sayyid Ahmad Sahib. I was regarded as their guest by both these seniors, hence I would participate in their meals. This became apparent when once during my year-long stay I could not join them for meals due to a severe fever. Meals would be sent to me by both seniors separately, after Zuhr, on a regular basis. Throughout the duration of the year's stay, I did not have to make my own arrangements for food.

After meals, Hadhrat would go to the zanaanah (the quarters occupied by
lah), he would leave for Musjid-e-?his females). After a short nap (qail Nabawi before Zawwaal (midday). The Zuhr Athaan would be announced soon after Zawwaal. Hadhrat would engage in tilaawat of the Qur'aan Shareef for about an hour from a few minutes after Zuhr Salaat. Thereafter, he would be occupied studying (the book) Wafaa-ul Wafaa. After Asr Salaat, he would proceed to the home of Maulana Sayyid Ahmad Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) whose home was on the ground floor and remain there until Maghrib.

Here (at the home of Maulana Sayyid Ahmad Sahib), Hadhrat would keep his majlis which would be open to the public. Both local residents and foreigners coming for Ziyaarat attended the majlis. On these occasions Hadhrat Maulana Sayyid Sahib took great delight serving green tea to all present.

ri (rahmatullah ʔDuring Rabiul Awwal 1345, Hadhrat Abdul Q~dir Raip alayh) arrived in Madinah Tayyibah with a few of his close associates. ri's majlis ʔDespite his illness, he would regularly attend Hadhrat Sah~ranp ri's associates would not attend. ʔafter Asr. However, some of Hadhrat Raip ri:ʔri one day complained to Hadhrat Sah~ranpʔIn this regard Hadhrat Raip

> "Hadhrat, insensitivity is predominating. Firstly, these people (referring to his associates) should have realised that when I am attending regularly, they too should ensure their attendance. Secondly, I have even reprimanded them for their absence."

ri (rahmatullah alayh) responded forcefully:ʔHadhrat Sah~ranp

> "Hadhrat, never! I feel highly embarrassed in this (i.e. in any attempt to canvass others to attend his bayaan). I never exhorted anyone to become bay't to my Shaikh (Hadhrat Qutb-e-lam Gangohi). I consider my Shaikh to be the Sun (of spiritual guidance and illumination). Whoever is not keen to derive celestial illumination from him, is the loser himself."

Hadhrat then pointing to me said:

> "It is the habit of this father and son (referring to myself and my father) to cling to the person who offers even the slightest attention to them."

In fact, I had for several days repeatedly requested Hadhrat:

"Hadhrat, a certain person is very sincere. Although he is devoted to Hadhrat, he completely abstains from thikr and shaghl. Hadhrat should write instructing him to observe thikr."

Each time Hadhrat's response would be:

"When he asks, I will instruct. Why should I show him when he does not enquire?"

ri, I said to Hadhrat ?A day before the episode of Hadhrat Raip ri (rahmatullah alayh): ?Sah~ranp

"If you permit, I shall myself write to that person (i.e. the sincere devotee referred to above)."

Hadhrat replied:

"Don't write anything on my behalf. You may write whatever you wish."

As mentioned earlier, on arrival in Madinah Tayyibah, Hadhrat engrossed himself in the completion of his Kitaab, Bazlul Majhood which had reached the forth volume prior to arrival in Madinah Tayyibah. On reaching Madinah Tayyibah, Hadhrat commenced with Kitaabul Janaa-iz. In the beginning of the manuscript of Bazlul Majhood written in Madinah Tayyibah, the following is recorded:

"13th Muharram 1345 Hijri, Saturday in Madinah Munawwarah."

The solitude which Hadhrat experienced, coupled to the barakaat of Madinah Tayyibah enabled him to complete one and a half volumes in 7½ months. Three and a half volumes of Bazlul Majhood were completed in approximately 9½ years while one and a half volumes were accomplished in 7½ months. The work was written in Maulana Sayyid Ahmad's room as

mentioned earlier. But for the acquisition of barkat, its completion was rendered in Musjidun Nabawi in the blessed place known as Raudhatum min Riy~dhil Jannat (a Garden from the Gardens of Jannat). Thus, at the end of Bazlul Majhood Hadhrat wrote:

> "With the taufeeq and strength granted by Allah Ta'ala, it has been accomplished in Madinah Munawwarah, in Raudhatum min Riy~dhil Jannat near to the Grave of the Leader of the progeny of }dam, the Leader of creation and the universe, on the 21st Sha'baan 1345 from the migration of Nabiyyul Ameen. O Allah! Accept it from us as you accept from Your close and pious servants. Make it purely for your Gracious Sake and forgive us for our sins, errors and acts which are not pleasing to you. Verily, You are most forgiving and gracious. You are the Rabb Who is oft-forgiving and merciful."

Hadhrat was extremely delighted with the completion of Bazlul Majhood.
On the accomplishment of his work, Hadhrat entertained the Ulama of Madinah to a lavish feast. The invitation was printed in Arabic. The original invitation is together with the manuscript of Bazlul Majhood in the Madrasah library. It is reproduced hereunder:

Bismill~hir Rahm~nir Raheem

All Praise is due unto Allah, The One. Salaat and Salaam be upon him after whom there will be no Nabi.

Honourable Hadhrat Shaikh ………
May your fuyoodh endure.
Assalaamu Alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuhu.

Allah Ta'ala has favoured the one who in extending this invitation, with the compilation of Bazlul Majhood which is the Sharah (commentary and elucidation) of Abu Dawood. He has granted its completion in the Holy City of Saahibul Mu'jiZaat (the Performer of Miracles). May the choicest blessing be on him and his family. May Allah Ta'ala accept it for His Gracious Sake

and may He permit Islam and the Muslimeen to derive benefit therefrom, }meen.

Your presence is desired after Salaatul Jumuah on the 23rd Sha'baan 1345 at Madrasatul Uloomish Shariyyah to participate in meals in conclusion of my happiness. Your presence is being anticipated. Shukr unto Allah. Was-salaam.

The inviter,
Khaadim of the Talabah
Khalil Ahmad

The dotted lines are the space where the name of the invited person was written.

After the completion of Bazlul Majhood, the morning part which was formerly devoted to writing this Kitaab, as was explained earlier, was now utilized also for studying Wafaa-ul Wafaa and other books which had accumulated during Hadhrat's stay in Madinah Tayyibah.

A few days later, the mubarak month of Ramadhaan commenced. During the holy month, Hadhrat would engage in tilawat after Ishraaq for a considerable time. Then after a short nap he would return to the Musjid before Zawwaal. He would return home after Zuhr. Ammajee, as well as myself, would listen to Hadhrat's Qur'aan. After Zuhr, I would present myself at Hadhrat's place of residence at the appointed time.

According to the usual practice, Hadhrat would proceed after Asr to the residence of Hadhrat Maulana Sayyid Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh). He would leave for Musjid-e-Nabawi a short while before Maghrib and make iftaar there with dates and Zam Zam water. After Maghrib, Hadhrat would recite two Juz in Nafl Salaat on the roof of Madrasah Uloom-e-Shariyyah and I would listen to his recitation. He would sit and perform this Nafl.

After performing Isha Salaat in Musjid-e-Nabawi, Hadhrat would return to the Madrasah and perform Taraaweeh behind Qaari Muhammad Taufeeq

Sahib who recited two Juz with utmost reverence and tranquillity. The Taraaweeh would end at 5 o' clock Arabic time or 12:30 a.m.

He would then retire for a rest at about 6 o' clock Arabic time (1:30 a.m.). I was instructed to wake him at 8 o' clock Arabic time (3:30 a.m.). Besides one or two occasions, I cannot remember finding Hadhrat sleeping.

Thereafter Hadhrat would listen to two Juz of two students of Madrasah Shariyyah. He would listen to them separately, following each student (in Nafl Salaat). Hadhrat was enthusiastic about listening to the Qiraat of Naafi'. Both these students were Maalikis and recited according to the Qiraat of Naafi'.

Towards the end of the Holy Month Hadhrat became affected with paralysis, hence he moved about with difficulty. The paralysis had in fact begun after accomplishment of Bazlul Majhood when he became afflicted with severe fever, colds, etc. But, as the result of the barkat of the Holy Month, these illnesses disappeared with the dawn of Ramadhaan Mubaarak. However, the illness reappeared two or three days before Eid and then paralysis set in. Sometimes the sickness would disappear and sometimes reappear. This pattern remained until the time of his demise as will be explained later.

Bay't and Sulook

Hadhrat Maulana }shiq Il~hi Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) has described in detail in Tazkaratul Khalil the episode of Hadhrat's Bay't and Sulook. A detailed explanation in this regard is also given in a separate chapter in Tazkaratur Rashid.

He writes that it is learnt from the anecdotes of Qutub-e-}lam Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) that just as he (Hadhrat Gangohi) was the first among the Ulama to become bay't to Hadhrat Haji Imd~dullah (rahmatullah alayh), so too, was Hadhrat Maulana Khalil Ahmad (rahmatullah alayh) the first among the contemporary Ulama to take bay't at the blessed hands of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). This is in line with a dream in which Rasulullah (ﷺ) said to the sister-in-law of Haji Imd~dullah (rahmatullah alayh):

> "Get away! The guests of Haji Imd~dullah are Ulama. I shall bake their bread."

The materialisation of this dream which transpired in the spiritual realm was in the spiritual relationship (Bay't) which Imaam-e-Rabb~ni (Maulana Gangohi) established with Haji Sahib directly without any intermediary, and with the spiritual relationship of Hadhrat Maulana Ambethwi through the medium of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh).

ri ?Regarding his bay't, the following narrative of Hadhrat Sah~ranp (rahmatullah alayh) is recorded in Tazkaratur Rashid:

> "Prior to entering into the relationship (Bay't), I had no special connection with Hadhrat nor were there any close family ties between us. During my student days I had a slight acquaintance with Hadhrat. I would only regard him as a holy }lim. One day my paternal uncle, Molvi Ans~r Ali Sahib said:
> 'After your studies, you should acquire Tasawwuf from Molvi Sahib (i.e. Hadhrat Gangohi).'

Once during Ramadhaan I went to Gangoh and at night went to the khaanqah to listen to his (Hadhrat Gangohi's) Qur'aan. I was standing under a Neem tree listening to his recitation during the Taraaweeh Salaat. He was a Hafiz with an exceptionally beautiful voice. He was reciting with such beauty that its sweetness is in my heart to this day. He was reciting Surah Ahzaab at the time.

My marriage took place in Gangoh during my student days, hence I had greater occasion of staying in Gangoh. During my stay in Gangoh I would spend the time in the blessed company of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh). I remember well that at that time I had the feeling of the sun's presence and a celestial light in that mubaarak confine (the khaanqah). I experienced peace and serenity in my heart despite the fact that I was not his mureed nor a devoted follower. Secondly, those who were present for spiritual and moral reformation, viz. Hafiz Abdur Rahm~n Sahib, Molvi Alt~fur Rahm~n Sahib, etc., had become embodiments of simplicity and virtue. Their moral character shorn of all evil attributes and adorned with lofty angelic qualities coupled with their love for the Sunnat and dislike for bid'at, made them copies of the Sahaabah. Nevertheless, the thought of requesting Hadhrat for bay't did not occur to me.

After termination of my studies when I was sent as a Mudarris

r, ?(teacher) to Madrasah Manglore in the district of Sah~ranp there developed in me a peculiar condition and an inclination for ibaadat. At that time the Halqah (gathering) of Janaab Q~dhi Muhammad Ismail was in great prominence. The thought of joining his gathering occurred to me. However, I also felt that I should first consult my seniors and seek their permission. Thus,

b (rahmatullah ?I consulted with Maulana Muhammad Yaq alayh) who wrote to me in reply:

'The paths towards Allah are according to the souls of people. Reaching Allah is not confined to the way you have adopted.

Although it is also a way of reaching Allah, presently it is not appropriate for you to join the Halqah.'

About this time – 1288 or 1289 – the idea of bay't occurred to me. Coincidentally, Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Q~sim Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) happened to come to Roorki. On my invitation he stayed at Manglore on his return. At night, in privacy I said:
'I have the thought of bay't. In our surroundings are several buzrugs. Yourself, Maulana Rashid Ahmad Sahib, Maulana Shaikh Muhammad Sahib and Q~dhi Muhammad Ismail Sahib. I do not know what is best for me. If you feel that it is best for me to enter into the association of your khuddaam (i.e. mureedeen), then do accept me. Alternatively, whatever you feel best for me, do instruct me.'

In reply, Hadhrat Maulana (rahmatullah alayh) made a long speech, the essence of which is this: There is none better than Maulana Rashid Ahmad Sahib at this time. I said: 'He is extremely reluctant regarding bay't. If you intercede on my behalf then this matter will be finalised.'

He responded: 'Good, when I come to Gangoh, then be there.'

I thus waited anxiously for the opportunity. When I was informed a few days later that Hadhrat Maulana was going to Gangoh, I immediately went and said (i.e. to Hadhrat Nanotwi): 'When a gracious man promises he fulfils (i.e. honours his promise).'

He smiled and said: 'Well and good.'

During the morning after he had discussed with Hadhrat, he called me. I entered, made salaam and sat down. Hadhrat Maulana Muhammad Q~sim Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) was silent. Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh) with a slight smile

on his countenance said: ‘These humble people become my mureeds. You are the son of a Peer and a selected one. Why do you want to enter into bay’t with me?’

I was already awe-struck when I had entered his august presence. This statement further incapacitated my senses. I could only stammer: ‘Hadhrat, I am worse, more contemptible and useless than them (the humble folk).’

He responded: ‘Enough! Enough! Make Istikhaarah. I am coming to the Musjid.’

I proceeded immediately to the Musjid, made wudhu, performed two raka’ts and recited the Masnoon Istikhaarah Duaa. On Hadhrat’s arrival he asked: ‘What is your opinion?’

I said: ‘My opinion is the same. Accept me in your subjection (ghulaami).’

Incidentally, Molvi Muhammad Ishaaq Ambetwi who was the son of Brother Hameed Ali who was studying by Hadhrat, was also present, waiting to be initiated. Hadhrat (rahmatullah alayh) instructed us both to repent and entered us into the System of Subjection (i.e. accepted them as his mureeds). All praise is for Allah for that bounty.”

ri (rahmatullah ?In the aforementioned narrative of Hadhrat Sah~ranp alayh), the agency of Hadhrat Nanotwi (rahmatullah alayh) is mentioned. ri had ?However, it is mentioned in Tazkaratul Khalil that Hadhrat Sah~ranp b Sahib the medium for ?appointed his maternal uncle, Hadhrat Maulana Yaq achieving this purpose (of bay’t to Hadhrat Gangohi). Hadhrat Gangohi ri had ?(rahmatullah alayh) accorded great attention to him. Hadhrat Sah~ranp written to him:

"Intercede on my behalf so that Hadhrat Gangohi accepts me in his bay't."

b Sahib wrote a letter of intercession and sent it ?Thus, Hadhrat Maulana Yaq ri who went with it to Gangoh.?to Hadhrat Sah~ranp

Since the information in Tazkaratur Rashid is the narrative of Hadhrat ri himself, it will have greater preference.?Sah~ranp

This was the initial stage of the bond of ishq (spiritual love) with his Shaikh. Thereafter, Hadhrat says about this bond with his Shaikh, Qutb-e-}lam Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh):

"Then (what followed) can only be described as death and annihilation."

(This means wholehearted and complete engrossment in the process of achieving moral purification and spiritual upliftment.)

In this regard, it is recorded in Tazkaratur Rashid that Hadhrat ri (rahmatullah alayh) said:?Sah~ranp

"When the time came to become bay't on the mubaarak hands of Hadhrat Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), I said:
'Hadhrat, I am unable to apply myself to thikr, shaghl and mujaahadah nor am I able to wake up at night.' Hadhrat smilingly said:
'Well, what wrong is there in this?'

ri) then asked:?A khaadim (of Hadhrat Sah~ranp
'Hadhrat, what happened then?'

Hadhrat gave a wonderful reply. He said:

‘Then I died and became annihilated.’ ”

ri became bay’t, and in Shawwaal ?Thus, in 1288 Hijri Hadhrat Sah~ranp 1288, Qutb-e-}lam Gangohi requested his Shaikh in Makkah Mukarramah, Hadhrat Haji Imd~dullah Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) to confer the Mantle of ri. In consequence of this intercession, Haji ?Khilaafat to Hadhrat Sah~ranp ri in Muharram 1289. He ?Sahib bestowed the Khilaafat to Hadhrat Sah~ranp also presented him with his blessed amaamah (as was mentioned earlier).

ri’s holy character can be ?The conditions of Hadhrat Sah~ranp appreciated from the twelve letters appearing in Tazkaratur Rashid, volume 3 under the caption, Makaateeb-e-Rashidiyyah and also from the five letters in Tazkaratul Khalil. Among my friends, the Zaakireen in general, and those whom I have authorised to initiate mureeds (i.e. Ijaazat-e-Bay’t) in particular, should repeatedly read these letters with great attention. For the sake of ri wrote ?barkat, I reproduce here one of the letters which Hadhrat Sah~ranp to Hadhrat Qutb-e-}lam Gangohi (rahmatullah alayh), and the latter’s reply.

ri’s Letter?Hadhrat Sah~ranp

“Hadhrat Sayyidi, my master and the medium of my day and night. May Allah perpetuate the shadow of your barakaat.

After presentation of salaams, this most humble and contemptible servant wishes to say that for some time now I had intended to inform you of my useless and sorrowful condition, but for fear of being audacious and the ????? of duties constituted an impediment.

Initially, after the association (i.e. by bay’t) and by virtue of the attention (of Hadhrat) I felt a happiness akin to that of a child. But since the mubarak days of fasting (Ramadhaan) I have been thrown into a valley of confusion – what should I say? Instead of qurb and wisaal (proximity to Allah Ta’ala), I experience deprivation and desolation.

From the beginning until the present time, this useless one could not do anything. Nevertheless, the grace and bounty of Allah has been with me by virtue of the wonderful tawajjuhaat (spiritual attention) of Hadhrat.

Although I have always been deficient in the fulfilment of commands, you have not curtailed your gaze of affection and kindness. This has enabled me to muster up courage. However, my courage has now broken down.

Whatever I think about, I see aliens. (This is a reference to Allah's Attributes). Anwaar (plural of Noor) are ghair (apart from Allah); Wujood (Existence) is ghair; Hairat (a spiritual state of ecstatic bewilderment in Divine Presence) is ghair.

The heart yearns for Divine Perception (Idraak) in a formless state (Bê-Kaif), but this appears impossible. Whatever idraak there occurs is coupled to some form. In short, my heart is racked by confusion. Initially there was the hope of the gracious gaze (Nathr-e-Lutf). Now even by searching for it, it remains indiscernible – as if it was something never mentioned.

Along with this bewilderment I experienced a darkness from one side. Despite this, Al-hamdulillah and again Al-hamdulillah, the presence of mind is intact and there is a clarity in the baatini (spiritual interior) of the heart.

To say more will be audacious and disrespectful. If there is a gracious word to be said to this servant in this regard, do instruct, for it will be a medium of contentment and peace.

The most contemptible servant hopeful of your gracious gaze.
Khalil Ahmad
r, 9th Thil Qa'dh 1315"?Sah~ranp

Hadhrat Gangohi's Reply

"From Bandah Rashid Ahmad. After the Masnoon Salaam, know that your letter has reached me and contents noted. Whatever you have written in regard to Hairat (Bewilderment) is, in fact, Taqarrub (Divine Proximity). The Buzrugs of the Deen have said that those in close Divine Proximity dwell in bewilderment.

The Zaat (Being) of Allah is beyond comprehension (Idraak) as is said (in the Qur'aan): "Eyes cannot comprehend Him". In fact, even the heart and intelligence of man cannot comprehend Him.

That Zaat is Mutlaq (i.e. conditions and states do not apply to Him). In fact, He is far above Mutlaq (the condition of being without conditions and states). There is no scope for even Itlaaq in His Zaat. Whatever form or condition regarding His Zaat perceived by the heart or intelligence of anyone is ghair (alien to His Zaat). The Auspicious Zaat is beyond such perception. Thus, in such a state, any Kaif (form or condition) which arises in anyone precludes any scope for comprehension of the Zaat. It is only the understanding of man.

Al-hamdulillah! You have acquired a share of this as mentioned in the Hadith, i.e. '… that you worship your Rabb as if you are seeing Him.' This is the goal of everything and this is the claim of Rasulullah (ﷺ). In whatever degree man is able to attain of it (Divine Perception), it elevates him to the heights of fortune.

Besides this, whatever other (spiritual) conditions (haalaat) occur, are not the goal (maqsood). Thus, on the basis of (the aayat):

'If you are grateful, I shall most certainly increase (My Bounties) for you.',

continue to strive in the relationship of Divine Proximity (Nisbat-e-Huzoor), and do not expect anything. Have hope for the grace of Allah.

Was-salaam. Make Duaa-e-Khair for this bandah (servant) as well. This bandah too will make duaa.

14th Thil Qa'dh 1315"

Letter No. 2

"Molvi Khalil Ahmad Sahib,
Assalaamu Alaikum!

Your letter has arrived. I am extremely happy to learn of your (condition of) Huzoor (Divine Presence) and your professed inability to express adequate Shukr (gratitude) (for this wonderful state). All praise for this is due to Allah. If man is transformed into thousands of tongues which express shukr for even the most insignificant bounty of Allah, lifelong, then too, he will not be able to offer adequate shukr. In fact, every intention to express shukr is also a great Ni'mat. Who is there who can express (adequate) shukr for the taufeeq of Huzoor? Yes if Allah accepts man's inability of shukr in lieu of shukr, then it is not far-fetched to say that the bandah is under (Divine) Favour. The bandah should understand that his dealing is with the Eternal Benefactor. He should thus annihilate himself in His remembrance and be shameful for his errors and deficiencies.

The stage which has been bestowed to you regarding shukr is termed Yaad-daasht in the terminology of Naqshabandiyah. Now, along with this Yaad-daasht it is essential to have Hayaa (shame) for Maalik-e-Haqeeqi (The True King – Allah Ta'ala). Just as one will not commit a displeasing act in the presence of some senior or honourable benefactor, so too should be one's attitude in privacy with That Maula (Friend and Protector, viz. Allah) Who is ever present and seeing (Haazir-Naazir), so that (the stage of) Huzoor becomes fully applicable to one.

Measure and weigh every act in the Scale of the Shariah's Law to ensure His pleasure. This meditation (muraaqabah) should be practised constantly. In short, one should contemplate before doing anything to ensure that every act done is for His Pleasure and every act shunned is on account of His Displeasure. It is, in fact, this state which is called Ihsaan. May Allah grant us taufeeq. Remember this humble one in your duaa. May I too be bestowed with this fortune (i.e. Ihsaan). Life has gone by wasted without the actual goal being attained.

If the good estimate (husn-e-zan) of friends is condoned (i.e. in the Divine Court), then I have hope in Allah's mercy, for He has said:

'I am according to the opinion which My servant has of Me.'

Regarding the issue of Nikah, I cannot give any categorical advice. You know your needs more than myself. It is among the needs of man, but for this need, numerous responsibilities and encumbrances have to be borne. If the niyyat is to increase the numbers of the Ummat, it is then a different matter (i.e. of merit).

Regarding your desire to take up residence in Gangoh, I have no objection. If you feel that it will be beneficial for you, then it is best. …"

It is not my intention to write the biography of Hadhrat, for that will be very voluminous. In fact, Tazkaratul Khalil is a concise sample of his biography. Nevertheless, as a sample, I shall reproduce from Tazkaratul Khalil some episodes of the Knowledge and spiritual ability of Hadhrat.

"On the occasion of Hadhrat's fifth Hajj when he went to Musjidul 1)
Haraam for Tawaaf-e-Qudoom, I (i.e. Maulana Zafar Ahmad Th~nvi) was sitting by Maulana Muhibbuddin who was among the senior Khulafaa of Hadhrat Haji Imd~dullah. He was also well-known as a Saahib-e-Kashf (one who receives inspiration from Allah Ta'ala). At that time Maulana was reciting his wird (daily quota) from a Durood Kitaab. Suddenly he turned to me and said:

"Who has entered the Haram at this time? The entire Haram is filled with anwaar (celestial illumination)."

ri (rahmatullah ?I remained silent. Suddenly we observed Hadhrat Sah~ranp alayh) who had just completed his tawaaf heading towards Baabus Safaa for the Sa-ee. He came near to Maulana Muhibbuddeen Sahib who stood up, smiled and commented:

"I too can say who has today come to the Haram."

He then shook hands and embraced Hadhrat who proceeded for the Sa-ee.

Maulana Muhibbuddeen sat again on his place and said to me: "Brother Zafar, Maulana Khalil is an embodiment of Noor. He is nothing besides Noor. I did not see Maulana Rashid Ahmad Sahib. I was told that he was a Qutubul Irshaad. Having seen Maulana's Khulafa I can say that truly, he was Qutubul Irshaad, hence he produced such perfect men (such as Hadhrat Khalil Ahmad)."

Maulana }shiq Il~hi Sahib writes: 2)
"Hadhrat rarely employed the power of his heart. He would resort to it only on special occasions of need. There was a debate r between Muslims and an Aryah. The Aryah was ?in Sah~ranp r. Hadhrat was present in ?transferred from Roopri to Sah~ranp the gathering. Molvi Kif~yatullah and Molvi Ahmadullah were appointed by the Muslims to record in writing the proceedings. However, Molvi Ahmadullah became tired and the duty devolved entirely on Molvi Kif~yatullah."

In the debate, on the side of the Aryah was a young, handsome Saadhu clad in red garb. He was reclining in an arm-chair. When a Muslim speaker would commence his speech, the Saadhu would sit up, lower his head (i.e. he resorted to his power of mesmerising/hypnotising). In consequence, the speeches of the Muslim speakers would be extremely disjointed and poor. Even Maulana Abdul Haq Haqq~ni was unable to present his speech on Daur and Tasalsul (these are technical terms in the science of logic).

I (i.e. Maulana }shiq Il~hi) then wrote a note to Mirza Azeez Beg, the chairman, informing him that when a Muslim speaker took the stand to speak, then this yogi cast his hypnotising influence, hence Maulana Khalil Ahmad Sahib should be notified. The chairman passed the note to Hadhrat. Immediately after reading the note, Hadhrat cast down his head. Thus commenced the battle of Haqq and Baatil between the spiritual hearts of the two. Within two minutes, the Saadhu stood up from the arm-chair looking restless, and left the gathering. Thereafter, the speeches of the Muslim

speakers were like the ocean let loose. In the end, eleven people embraced Islam.

During the afternoon meals on the same day, Hadhrat said: "I firmly believed that Islam would remain dominant. 'Haq dominates and cannot be dominated.' "

But, Allah Ta'ala is independent. His fear should be at all times and with everyone.

After the annual Jalsah of Madrasah Mazaaharul Uloom, the visitors 3) from outside had left. The train for Punj~b arrived first and the travellers for Punj~b took up their seats.

A Saadhu coming from Hardaw~r, who also happened to be on the train enquired about the large gathering on the station. A khaadim of Hadhrat r was a great Shaikh and people from ?informed him that here in Sah~ranp various places had come to meet him. They were now returning home. After the Saadhu enquired further about Hadhrat, he sat down silently.

The khaadim afterwards explained that after a while he experienced an alien feeling and severe pressure on his heart. There was no indication as to the cause of this condition settling over the khaadim. His heart was gripped by fear and bewilderment. He was unable to distinguish night from day nor was he aware whether he was in a gathering or alone. He was caught in a spell of extreme bewilderment inspite of the coach being packed to capacity. He even lost the ability of speech.

While embroiled in this fearful state, he suddenly saw the resemblance of ri whose reflection commenced to fall on his heart and he ?Hadhrat Sah~ranp heard an inner voice commanding: Recite!

?? ?? ? ?? ?? ? ?? ?ﻠﺳ

Although the tongue was dumb and numb, he started this thikr with his heart. Within a few minutes the terrible condition disappeared and serenity was restored to his heart and his ears resumed hearing. He heard the Saadhu saying:

> ru (i.e. Hadhrat) is highly qualified and very ?“Truly, your G powerful.”

The khaadim said that he then understood that the spell over him was the inner influence which the Saadhu was exercising. He (the khaadim) then taunted the Saadhu:

> “Is this all you could display? At least you should have demonstrated better ability!”

The Saadhu was dejected and his face displayed his defeat. He turned away and never spoke again.”

It has already been mentioned that Hadhrat’s illness commenced with the completion of Bazlul Majhood. Sometimes he would be well and sometimes severely indisposed. In reality Hadhrat’s health and strength were in the accomplishment of Bazlul Majhood. At the end of the Holy Month he experience the effects of partial paralysis. This too, would sometimes disappear, only to reappear later. Even on Eidul Fitr, the effect of the paralysis was predominant. He was, therefore, unable to attend the Eid Salaat in the Haram Shareef. However, later (after all had left for the Eid Salaat), he regained some strength. With the aid of a stick he limped towards the Musjid Shareef.

After we had returned from Madinah Tayyibah, Hadhrat would continue attending the Haram Shareef, albeit with some difficulty. In the month of Rabiuth Thaani 1346, the severity of his illness intensified. Fever, colds and paralysis increased. Sometimes, the sickness would lessen. When the severity of his illness increased he could not go to Musjid-e-Nabawi. However, when he felt somewhat better, he would go to the Musjid with the support of a stick and an assistant.

In the first week of Rabiuth Thaani 1346 he experienced a pain in the chest, which would disappear by massaging.

In the second week, on the request of some Ulama of Madinah, he opened the dars (class) of Abu Dawood Shareef after Asr at the residence of Maulana Sayyid Ahmad. After imparting lessons for two days, Saturday and Sunday, while returning from Zuhr Salaat on Monday, he mentioned that he was again experiencing pain on the chest. He added that he had felt a similar pain three or four days earlier, which disappeared within two or three hours after massaging. On reaching the house, he was massaged. At the time of Asr although the pain had decreased, the weakness did not permit him to go to the Haram Shareef. He performed Asr Salaat at home behind Molvi Sayyid Ahmad Sahib. Inspite of his weakness, he stood and performed Salaat.

His weakness increased and instead of feeling feverish he started to feel cold and perspired. He could not perform Maghrib standing. Even while sitting, he requested Molvi Sayyid Ahmad Sahib to perform the Salaat short and quickly. His condition deteriorated and he performed Isha Salaat sitting on the bed. He spent the night in restlessness reciting the Kalimah, Istighfaar and Durood. He did not get a wink of sleep.

Tuesday morning he again performed Fajr Salaat sitting on the bed. His perspiration and coldness went on increasing. It was clear that this morning was his last morning. Medication carried on during the day.

At the time of Zuhr he was overcome with so much weakness that he was unable to make wudhu. With tayammum he performed Salaat sitting on the bed. Thereafter, movement became very difficult.

By Asr time his condition had further deteriorated greatly. He performed Asr with much difficulty. By Maghrib he no longer had any strength to lift himself. The khuddaam performed their Salaat separately and were waiting in anticipation for Hadhrat to slightly recover for Maghrib Salaat. But Hadhrat's relationship with the world was completely severed. Besides Paas Anfaas (this is a method of thikr by breathing), nothing else was discernible. He did not respond to any talk nor ask anything.

Twenty four hours had passed in complete silence and on Thursday 16th Rabiuth Thaani 1346 in Arabia, and 15th Rabiuth Thaani 1346 in India, Hadhrat reached his final destination proclaiming aloud ‘Allah! Allah!’ And, suddenly he closed his eyes and was silent.

Inspite of the short time available, the arrangements for burial were quickly accomplished. Sayyid Ahmad Taww~b Sahib gave the ghusl while Abus Saud handed on water. Molvi Sayyid Ahmad and Molvi Abdul Kareem assisted. The Janaazah was quickly prepared and was brought outside the Musjid Shareef and placed near the Baab-e-Jibraeel for the Janaazah Salaat. After Maghrib Salaat, Maulana Shaikh Tayyib, the Rector of Madrasah Shariyyah conducted the Janaazah Salaat. The Janaazah was thereafter taken to Jannatul Baqi (the qabrustan in close proximity to Musjidun Nabawi).

Due to the availibility of very little time, the news of Hadhrat’s demise could not be disseminated. Nevertheless, the crowd was so large that numerous people could not gain the opportunity to apply their shoulder to the Janaazah as much as they endeavoured to do so. In fact, it was considered a great boon to be able to simply touch the Janaazah.

Finally his celestial body which had dissolved and was consumed by the fire of Divine Love was assigned to the grave before Ishaa. That night was the night of extreme happiness, for Hadhrat had repeatedly expressed in both word and writing:

> “Would that my sand (body) be mingled with the holy sand of Baqi.”

Al-hamdulillah! His wish was fulfilled. (Innalillahi...)

Hadhrat's Dream

On the very day of his illness, Hadhrat said:

"In a dream I saw myself in a building beneath which is a basement. The ceiling was made of wooden boards. Two of these boards were loose and hanging down. I, therefore, descended very easily into the basement. When I reached the bottom I discovered that it was a very large, solidly built and a well-lit structure. On the one side was a door from which was shining a light as well as some other objects of illumination. But, I intended to return via the opening in the ceiling where the two boards were hanging (i.e. through the gap I had entered). My mind then drifted from there and my eyes opened."

Hadhrat then presented the following interpretation:

"The time may be at any time. But in this dream are the good tidings of comfort for me in the qabr. That illuminated door indicates the Door of Jannat as is confirmed in the Ahaadith."

After Molvi Sayyid Ahmad Sahib heard the interpretation, he left, Hadhrat called his wife and appealingly said:

"Whatever your rights are over me, even if I had spoken harshly to you, for Allah's Sake forgive me."

He thereafter addressed his brother, Haji Maqbool Ahmad who was living with Hadhrat for many years:

"I was angry with you many times and had spoken harshly to you. Do forgive me."

(Tazkaratul Khalil)

It is possible that Maulana }shiq Il~hi Sahib had narrated this dream in an abbreviated form or it is possible that this is another dream which Hadhrat

saw after my return from Madinah Tayyibah. The latter is more probable. In my presence Hadhrat (rahmatullah alayh) had mentioned that after the removal of the loose boards he reached Aden and then Shaikh Rashid Ahmad Sahib appeared.

Hadhrat told me to present an interpretation, but I declared my inability to do so. He then said:

> "Insha'Allah, in the dream are the good tidings of Jannat-e-Aden."

It is my understanding that Shaikh Rashid Ahmad refers to Hadhrat's Shaikh, Qutb-e-}lam Gangohi. The meeting of souls after death has been narrated.

May Allah Ta'ala bestow a part of the fuyood of these seniors to this humble one, for this is not far from His Grace.

> "Verily, He is Magnanimous, Gracious, Affectionate and Merciful."

Tabweebul Hikam

Tabweebul Hikam, the translation of which is Itm~mun Ni'am, is the ri. This in turn is the ?work of Hadhrat Maulana Shaikh Ali Multaqi Burh~np tabweeb of Al-Hikam which is the Kitaab of Shaikhul Mash~-ikh Qutb-e-}lam Shaikh Ibn At~ullah Iskandari.

Al-Hikam is a famous treatise in Ilm-e-Tasawwuf. It is unparalleled in the mysteries and secrets of Tasawwuf. But, the work is not arranged in any systematic order, hence All~mah Ali Multaqi arranged it in systematic order. He divided the Kitaab into 30 chapters.

A brief life-sketch of the author of Al-Hikam and of the author of Tabweebul Hikam has been presented by Maulana Muhammad Hay~t Sambhali, the Naazim of Madrasah Hayaatul Uloom Mur~dab~d. His presentation appears in the beginning of some copies of Ikm~lush Shiyam. I shall here record something of the biographies of these two authors. Part of it is from Maulana Sambhali's writings and part from other writings.

Shaikh Ibn At~ullah Iskandari, the Author of Al-Hikam

His name is Ahmad Bin Muhammad Bin Abdul Kareem Bin At~ullah Iskandari. His title is T~juddin. He belonged to the Shaazli Sufi Order and followed the Maaliki Math-hab. His kunniyat (surname) is Abul Fadhl. He is the student of Shaikh Taqi Subki.

Among his asaatizah (teachers) is Shaikh Abul Abb~s Marsi who was among the selected pupils of Shah Abul Hasan Sh~zli. It is a well-known fact that Shaikh Abul Abb~s was the solitary inheritor of the Uloom (plural of Ilm) of Hadhrat Shah Abul Hasan Sh~zli.

Shaikh Ibn At~ullah was a great zaahid (saint) and among the top-ranking Auliya of the time. His speeches produce spiritual sweetness in the hearts. He passed away from this transitory abode to the eternal abode of bliss in the year 709 Hijri at Qur~fah, near to Cairo. (Tabqaat-e-Sha'raani).

Some of his wonderful works are At-tanweer Fi Ithbaatit Taqdeer, Al-Hikamul Ataa-iyyah and Lataa-iful Mian. When he wrote his Kitaab, Al-Hikamul Ataa-iyyah, he showed it to his Ustaad, Shaikh Abul Abb~s Marsi who commented as follows, after having carefully perused it:

> "O my son! In this treatise you have discharged the aims of all friends and even more."

This Kitaab has been greatly accepted by the Khawaas (the elite in the Spiritual sphere, i.e. the Auliya), hence many commentaries have been q wrote three commentaries of it. Besides this, ?written on it. Shaikh Zarr Shaikh Muhammad Ibn Ibr~him wrote Ghaithul Muwaahib and his son, Ali Bin Muhammad Bin Ibr~him wrote At-Tambiyyah. A number of other commentaries mentioned by the author of Kashfuz Zunoon, were also written.

Maulana Hay~t Sahib has reproduced two of his miracles from Jaami' Karaamaat-e-Auliya which is the Kitaab of Shaikh Yusuf Bin Ismail Nibh~ni. The latter has mentioned these two miracles on the authority of Shaikh f Mun~di Misri, the commentator of Al-Hikam. These miracles ?Abdur Ra-are as follows:

All~mah Kam~l Ibnul Hum~m, the author of Fathul Qadeer once recited 1) d at the graveside of Shaikh Ibn At~ Iskandari. When he reached the ?rah H?S aayat:

???? ? ? ?? ????

(Among them are unfortunate and fortunate ones.),

the Shaikh's voice came from the qabr saying:

"O Kam~l, among us are no unfortunate ones."

It was for this reason that before he died, All~mah Kam~l Ibnul Hum~m instructed that he be buried in close proximity to the grave of Shaikh Ibn At~.

Shaikh Ibnul Hum~m Hanafi, in addition to being an Imaam of Fiqh and Hadith had a high rank in kashf and karaamaat. He died on the 7th Ramadhaanul Mubaarak 361 Hijri on a Friday. According to some Ulama he was among the Abdaal. *(Abdaal are a class of Auliya whose identities remain concealed. They possess miraculous powers and execute a variety of tasks under Divine Command in various places of the world. – Translator).* ti states in Baghyat Lu'aat that Ibnul Hum~m was a powerful ?All~mah Suy laat) he was ?debater who would often say that in the logical sciences (Ma'q not the muqallid (follower) of anyone.

One of Hadhrat Shaikh At~'s students had gone for Hajj. Although he had 2) met and left his Shaikh in his place at home, he was astonished to see him in Maqaam-e-Ibr~him and other places. On his return he enquired from others if Hadhrat had gone for Hajj after his (the student's) departure. The people replied in the negative. When he went to meet his Shaikh, he narrated the several occasions he (the student) had met him during Hajj. Hearing this, Hadhrat Shaikh smiled.

Similar episodes of other Akaabir (senior Auliya) appear in my book Fadhaa-il-e-Hajj.

Maulana Ali Muttaqi – Author of Tabweebul Hikam

The lineage of Shaikh Ali Muttaqi is stated in Nazhatul Khawaatir as follows:
"Ash-Shaikhul Imaamul Alimul Kabir Al-Muhaddith Ali Bin Hus~mud-din Bin Abdul M~lik Bin Q~dhi Kh~n Al-Muttaqi Shazli Al-Madini Al-Chishti ri.?Burh~np

r. For some reason Maulana's father, ?His ancestors hailed from Jaunp r where Maulana Ali Muttaqi was born ?Hus~mud-din migrated to Burh~np during the year 885 Hijri. In some books the erroneous date of 857 is mentioned. I have explained this error in detail in the introduction of Laamiud-Daraari.

At the age of 8, his father had him initiated (made bay't) to Shah B~jin whose real name is Bah~-uddin Chishti. Shah Sahib was a renowned }lim and a great Wali of his time. Maulana Ali Muttaqi had acquired his knowledge at the primary level from Shah Sahib. After Shah Sahib's demise in 912 Hijri, Maulana Ali Muttaqi entered into the circle of the Mureedeen of Shah Abdul Hakeem, the son of Shah Bah~-uddin. He remained for a considerable time in his company in the acquisition of Uloom-e-Zaahiriyyah and Uloom-e-Baatiniyyah (i.e. Academic studies of Hadith, Fiqh, etc., and Tasawwuf). He acquired the Mantle of Khilaafat from him in the Chishtiyyah Order.

He then went to the city of Multan where he joined the company of Shaikh Hus~mu-ddin Muttaqi from whom he derived much spiritual benefit. In 952 Hijri, with the intention of proceeding to Makkah Mukarramah, he left Multan and arrived in Gujerat. During that age the Hujjaaj from Hindustan embarked from Gujerat which was under the reign of Sultan Mahmud III. The Sultan met the Shaikh with great honour and respect. He retained the Shaikh for several months as his guest. Thereafter, he left for Makkah Mukarramah.

In Makkah he derived further benefit from Shaikh Abul Hasan Bakri Misri Ash-Sh~fi on whose Wilaayat (Sainthood) their exists the consensus of all the Ulama. He also gained much benefit from the company of Shaikh Muhammad Bin Muhammad Sakh~wi who was a great }lim in Arabia. The benefit which Maulana Ali Muttaqi derived from these august personalities was in the field of Hadith and Tasawwuf. He also acquired Khilaafat in the Qaadiri, Shazli and Madni Sufi Orders.

Since it was difficult to derive benefit from Jam'ul Jawaami' which is the ti in the subject of Masaaneed (Narrational Chains of ?work of All~mah Suy Ahaadith), Shaikh Ali Muttaqi simplified it by systemizing it in paragraph and chapter form. This simplified version is known by the title, Kanzul Ummaal which is a famous Kitaab of Hadith. It was printed in and disseminated from Hyderabad throughout the world. It is an extremely beneficial Kitaab.

Besides Kanzul Ummaal, the Shaikh had written many other Kitaabs which number more than a hundred according to the author of Abjadul Uloom.

Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b, the close student of Shaikh Ali Muttaqi records many wonderful episodes and miracles of his Shaikh in his book, It-tihaafut Taqi Fi Fadhlish Shaikh Ali Muttaqi. Among these episodes, he narrates that when the time for his Shaikh's demise neared, he (his Shaikh) was overwhelmed by conditions of enthusiasm (Jazbaat). He called Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b and instructed:

"Recite that poem."

Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b says that he understood which verses his Shaikh was referring to. On hearing the recitation, the Shaikh went into a state of ecstasy and instructed Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b to repeatedly recite the verses. While the verses were being recited the khaadim announced that meals were ready. Since it was Hadhrat Shaikh's practice of mixing all the foods into one, he instructed the khaadim to mix the food in such a way that there remains no vestige of a second kind. There should be only unity.

Regarding this admixture of different foods mentioned above, it was also the practice of my honourable father, Hadhrat Muhammad Yahya Sahib (rahmatullah alayh) to mix different varieties of food into one. When the food of my father, of Hadhrat Maulana Abdul Latief (the previous Naazim of Madrasah Mazaahirul Uloom) and of Maulana Zafar Ahmad Thanvi (Mudarris in the Madrasah) would arrive from their respective homes, the different varieties would be mixed together with the food of some students who participated in the meals. The food of the students would come from different homes in the neighbourhood. All these foods were mixed into a single food which was called Thareed. Sometimes bread too was added to the admixture which was extremely delicious.

Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b says that Hadhrat Shaikh passed the entire night in this state of ecstasy. At the time of passing away, his mubarak head was resting on the thighs of Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b while he (Shaikh Ali Muttaqi) was engrossed in the Thikr of Allah. He died at the age of 90 years on 2nd Jamaadil Ula, 975 Hijri.

Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dahlawi gives a lengthy account of Shaikh Ali Muttaqi in five chapters of his book, Zaadul Muttaqeen.

Maulana Hay~t Sahib narrates many karaamaat (miracles) of Shaikh Ali Muttaqi. He also narrated the following episode:

Approximately twelve or fourteen years after the death of Shaikh Ali Muttaqi, his paternal cousin's son, Ahmad passed away. Before passing away, Ahmad had expressed the wish to be buried in the qabr of some buzrug. Since it is the practice in Makkah to open up old graves for burying others, it was decided to bury the Marhoom (deceased) in the qabr of Shaikh Ali Muttaqi. When the grave was opened up, the mubarak body was discovered intact with the kafan in the same way in which it was buried years ago despite the fact that bodies disintegrate, and are transformed into soil within a short while on account of the peculiar characteristics of the sand of Makkah Mukarramah.

It is recorded in Abjadul Uloom that Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b said:

"I saw Rasulullah ( ) in a dream. I asked: 'O Rasulullah! Who is the noblest in this age?' "

Rasulullah ( ) said:
"Your Shaikh, then Muhammad T~hir."

This anecdote is narrated in greater detail in Nazhhatul Khawaatir. The anecdote is very marvellous. It is recorded on the authority of An-Noorus Saafir. The anecdote is as follows:

"On the night of 27th Ramadhaan, Shaikh Ali Muttaqi made ziyaarat of Rasulullah ( ) in a dream, and enquired:
'O Rasulullah! Who is the noblest in this age.'

Rasulullah ( ) said: 'You'. The Shaikh asked: 'O Rasulullah! Then who?' Rasulullah ( ) replied:
'Muhammad T~hri Hindi.'

The very same night Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b saw the dream which was mentioned earlier. In the morning Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b hastened to his Shaikh to relate his dream. However, before he even spoke, his Shaikh said:
'I too last night saw a dream similar to the dream you saw.'

The author of Nuzhah has written with great elaboration the biography of Shaikh Ali Muttaqi. Maulana Hay~t Sahib has also recorded the following wasiyyat (testament) of Shaikh Ali Muttaqi:

"Bismill~hir Rahm~nir Raheem

May Durood and Salaam be on our Chief Muhammad ( ), on all his family and companions.

This is the Wasiyyat which is written by the one who is entirely dependent on Allah, Ali Bin Hus~m who is known as Muttaqi. This Wasiyyat has been

written on the day which was the day of departure from this world and the day of entry into the Hereafter.

When this Faqeer was a child, his father (May Allah be pleased with him.) had him initiated (as a mureed) by the illustrious Shaikh B~jin (May his soul be sanctified.). The tareeq *(spiritual way of leading mureeds up the spiritual ladder – Translator)* was the method of loftiness, purity and ecstasy. When I attained the age of discernment, I chose his sacred personality for being my Shaikh. I remained pleased with him as my Shaikh. The Mash~-ikh have said that when a child is made the mureed of a Shaikh, then after reaching buloogh (maturity), he (the child) has the choice of remaining the mureed of his Shaikh or of entering the association of another Shaikh of his choice. Acting on this directive I remained the Mureed of the Shaikh whom my father had chosen for me.

After the demise of my father and my Shaikh (May Allah be pleased with both), I acquired the Mantle of the Chishti Mash~-ikh from my Shaikh's son, Shaikh Abdul Hakeem (May his soul be sanctified).

Thereafter I yearned for such a Shaikh who would guide me along the lofty and precarious stages of the Tareeq (Tasawwuf). I, therefore, turned my gaze to Multaan and stayed in the service of }rif Billah, Shaikh Hus~muddin Muttaqi for some time.

I then journeyed to the Haramain Shareefain (Makkah and Madinah). There I chose the companionship of }rif Billah, Shaikh Abul Hasan Bakri. From him I acquired the Mantle of Khilaafat of the Qaadiriyyah, Shaazaliyyah and Madiniyyah Orders. These three Mantles I also gained from Shaikh Muhammad Bin Muhammad Sakh~wi (May their souls be sanctified)."

His Students

Shaikh Ali Muttaqi had numerous students. Maulana Hay~t Sahib has described some of them.

r. His father passed away ?Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b was born in Burh~np 1) while he (Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b) was in early childhood. At the age of 12 he was sent to Gujerat, Dakkan and other cities for the acquisition of Knowledge. At the age of 20, in 963 Hijri, he went to Makkah Mukarramah where he stayed in the service of Shaikh Ali Muttaqi and attained accomplishment in both the exoteric (zaahir) and esoteric (baatin) spheres. On the day of his death (i.e. his Shaikh's death), his Shaikh appointed Shaikh Abdul Wahh~b as his Khalifah. After the demise of his Shaikh, he spent 36 years in Makkah Muazzamah imparting the knowledge of Hadith and Fiqh. He died in the year 1001 Hijri.

In the Kitaab, Ittihaafut Taqi Fi Fadhlish Shaikh Ali Al-Muttaqi, it is mentioned that his favoured student was the famous Muhaddith of Hindustan, Hadhrat Shaikh Abdul Haq Muhaddith Dahlawi.

Shaikh Muhammad T~hir Patni whose actual name is Muhammad Bin 2) ~t. However, in ?T~hir as he himself states in his Kitaab, Tazkaratul Maudh Gujerat, the father's name is generally made part of the son's name. The author of Nuzhah states his lineage as follows: Ash-Shaikhul }limul Kabeer Al-Muhaddith Al-Lughwi All~mah Mujaddid Deen Muhammad Bin T~hir Bin Ali Al-Hanafi Al-Fatni Al-Gujerati.

He was born in Patn in 913 Hijri. He is of the Bohrah community which is a prominent community of Gujerat. This community had embraced Islam at the hands of Shaikh Mulla Ali Haidri whose qabr is in Khumb~yat, a famous place in Gujerat.

According to the author of Nuzhatul Khaw~tir (died 1341 Hijri) this community had entered the fold of Islam approximately seven centuries before his time.

In the time of Shaikh Muhammad T~hir, the beliefs of Muhammad ri were fast spreading in Hindustan. The Bohrah community was ?Jaunp

ri who had proclaimed himself the Mahdi. His ?following Muhammad Jaunp sect is, therefore, labelled Mahdiyyah.

When Shaikh Muhammad T~hir returned to Gujerat from Makkah and observed this deplorable condition of his people, he removed his turban from his head and pledged:

"As long as this bid'ah has not been eradicated, I shall not don a turban."

In 980 Hijri, Shah Akbar conquered Gujerat and he met Shaikh Muhammad T~hir in Patn. The king tied the amaamah with his hands and pledged:

"The eradication of this bid'ah in accordance with your wish is my responsibility."

Appointing Kh~n A'zam Mirza Azeez the governor of Gujerat, the King instructed him to eliminate this bid'at in fulfilment of the command of the Shaikh. The governor gave full assistance to the Shaikh.

However, in 985 Hijri, Abdur Raheem Kh~n Kh~nah who was a Shiah, was appointed the governor. He aided the Mahdiyyah sect. The Shaikh set out on a journey to Akbarab~d to lodge a complaint to the king about the attitude of ri ?the new governor. Along the journey the disciples of Muhammad Jaunp martyred the Shaikh in the year 968. His body was transported to Patn.

His work, Majma-ul Bihaar is famous in the subject of Lught-e-Hadith. His other well-known Kitaabs are Al-Mughni Fi Dhabti Asmaa-ir Rijaal, nul Maudhu-aat and Tazkaratul Maudhu-aat.?Qaan

It is necessary to point out that he was a follower of the Hanafi Math-hab. He, himself, explicitly mentions this fact in both his Kitaabs – Tazkaratul nul Maudh-aat. Thus, those who have written that he ?Maudhu-aat and Qaan was a Shaafi, have erred.

ri Siddiqui was initially the mureed ?3) Shah Muhammad Fadhlullah Burh~np of Shaikh Safi Gujerati. Thereafter he went to Makkah Muazzamah and spent approximately twelve years in the service of Shaikh Ali Muttaqi, achieving accomplishment in Uloom-e-Zaahiri and Baatini.

After his return from Makkah he continued the profession of dars and r.?tadrees (teaching the Deen). He died in 1029 Hijri in Burh~np

Shaikh Shuh~buddin Ibn Hajar Makki was among the distinguished 4) Ulama of Arabia. He is the author of numerous famous Kitaabs. Among his books are Khairaatul Hisaan Fi Manaaqibin Nu'maan, Fataawal Kubra, Sharah Shamaa-il-e-Tirmizi, Sharah Mishkaat and Az-Zawaajir an-Iqtiraafil Kabaa-ir. Regarding this latter book, it is said that there is no better kitaab on the subject of kabaa-ir (major sins).

In refutation of the Rawaafidh sect, he wrote As-Sawaa-iqil Muhriqah which is well-known. Besides these, he had written many kitaabs such as Abjadul Uloom, etc.

Initially he was the Ustaaz of Shaikh Ali Muttaqi. However, later he became his student. He also gained the Mantle of Khilaafat from Shaikh Ali Muttaqi. His lineage is Ahmad Bin Muhammad Bin Ali Bin Hajar. He was an Imaam in both Fiqh and Hadith.

He was born in the month of Rajab, 909 Hijri. During infancy his father had passed away. He studied the primary kitaabs by the Mash~-ikh of the age. In 924 he was admitted to Jami' Azhar where he acquired knowledge from the famous Mash~-ikh of the time.

Towards the end of 933, he relocated to Makkah Mukarramah where he became involved in the profession of Ifta and Tadrees. He died in Makkah Mukarramah. During his stay at Makkah, he travelled twice to Misr (Egypt).

Among his books, Tuhfatul Muhraaj Sharh Minhaajin Nawawi (in Shaafi Fiqh) is a voluminous work. In the margins of Fawaa-id-e-Bahiyyah, numerous of his kitaabs are mentioned.

According to the author of Abjad, he died in 975 Hijri. This has been narrated on the authority of Shaikh Abdul Haq. However, in the Haashiyyah (Margin) of Fawaa-id-e-Bahiyyah the year 995 is mentioned.

Since the translation of the introduction of Tabweebul Hikam, which appears at the beginning of Itm~mun Ni'am, was not included in Ikm~lush Shiyam, I am reproducing it here.

"Bismill~hir Rahm~nir Raheem

All praises are for Allah Who lifts the veil from subtleties for His selected servants. Durood and Salaam be upon our Chief, Muhammad (ﷺ) who is the chosen one of that auspicious group to whom Hikmat and Nubuwwat were bestowed. And, may peace and blessings descend on his progeny and companions who are the fountains in the fields of spiritual subtleties and mysteries.

This humble servant dependent on the Independent One, Ali Bin Hus~muddin who is known by the title Muttaqi Hindi (May Allah forgive him, his parents and all the Believers) says: When I saw the Kitaab, Hikam which is the work of Imaam Muhaqqiq }rif Abul Fadhl T~juddin Ahmad Bin Abdul Kareem Bin At~ Iskandari and found it to be the best of all books in the Knowledge of Tasawwuf, then even though the Mutaqaddimeen Sufiyah did not, to the best of my knowledge, embark on a commentary of it, there dawned in my heart the thought of arranging the words of wisdom in systematic form in chapters so that the learning of the words and meanings is somewhat simplified. This arrangement in chapters (Tabweeb) will also be a concise commentary. I name it An-Nahjul Atam Fi-Tabweebil Hikam. I am arranging it in 30 chapters."

This is the introduction of this humble one. I now commence in the Name of Allah the actual Kitaab, Ikm~lush Shiyam.

Zakariyya Kandhalwi
Friday 4th Jamadil Awwal 1387

(Zakariyya Kandhalwi is Hadhrat Shaikhul Hadith Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya – rahmatullah alayh – Translator.)

PREFACE BY THE SHAARIH (COMMENTATOR), MAULANA MUHAMMAD ABDULLAH GANGOHI, MUDARRIS OF MADRASAH ARABIYAH KANDHLAH

All praises are for Allah. We recite His hamd (praise). We seek His aid. We seek forgiveness from Him. We believe in Him. We trust in Him and we take protection with Allah from the evils of ourselves and from the evils of our deeds.

Whomever Allah guides, none can lead astray and whomever He leads astray, none can guide.

We bear testimony that there is no deity but Allah and that, verily, Muhammad (ﷺ) is His slave and Rasool.

Sometime ago my Murshid, Hadhrat Maulana Al-H~j Al-Hafiz Molvi Khalil Ahmad on the instruction of our Murshid, Hadhrat Maulana Ash-Shaikh Al-H~j Imd~dullah Muhaajir-e-Makki (May his soul be sanctified), had translated in Urdu Tabweebul Hikam. This Urdu translation was published under the title, Itm~mun Ni'am Tarjumah Tabweebul Hikam. It has been printed several times.

Since the Urdu translation in most places was beyond the comprehension of the laymen, Hadhrat instructed me to write a commentary in Urdu. In obedience to the command, I wrote this commentary taking aid from the Hikam of Ibn At~ which is the original Arabic commentary of Tabweebul Hikam.

I have named this commentary Ikm~lush Shiyam Sharah Itm~mun Ni'am, Tarjumah Urdu Tabweebul Hikam.

If I have reached rectitude, it is from Allah, then from the barakaat of my Murshid. If I have erred, it is from my nafs.

May Allah accept it and make it beneficial.

I do hope that those who study this commentary will remember Hadhrat ri), the original author, the author of Tabweeb and myself in their ?(Sah~ranp supplications.

Muhammad Abdullah Gangohi
(May Allah forgive him and his parents).

Mudarris at Madrasah Arabiyyah Kandhlah
8th Safar 1338 Hijri

IKM}LUSH SHIYAM
SHARAH

ITM}MUN NI'AM
TARJUMAH

TABWEEBUL HIKAM

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

THE FIRST CHAPTER ON KNOWLEDGE

Only such Knowledge is beneficial, whose rays spread through the breast and heart, and dispel the veils of doubts and suspicion from the heart.

Beneficial Knowledge (Ilm-e-Naafi') refers to the knowledge of Allah's Zaat (Being) and Sifaat (Attributes). It is that knowledge by which man learns the way of worshipping Him. The similitude of this Knowledge is that of a lamp or candle. When it is cast in the heart of the bandah (servant of Allah), its rays illumine his heart and all vestiges of doubt and suspicion pertaining to either the Deen or the dunya (world) are eliminated. In everything the doors of Yaqeen (absolute conviction) and Haqeeqat (reality and truth) are opened up and the darkness of shahwat (lowly desire) is dispelled from his heart. This is the meaning of Haqeeqat-e-Ilm (The Reality of Knowledge).

Any knowledge which is devoid of this quality and effect is not Ilm. It is merely a verbal knowledge (i.e. it is not Haqeeqat-e-Ilm). *(In other words, it*

is an outer-facade or a mere shadow of Knowledge devoid of reality – Translator.)

Beautiful Ilm is such Knowledge which is accompanied by Fear for Allah.

Divine Fear is to perceive in the heart the greatness and grandeur of Allah Ta'ala. When Ilm is accompanied by this quality, it will be the best and most beautiful Knowledge because Allah Ta'ala has praised in His Kalaam those who possess such Ilm. He says:

"Verily, among His servants only the Ulama fear Allah."

Thus a knowledge devoid of Divine Fear is not Ilm nor is the bearer of such superficial knowledge an }lim-e-Haqqaani. The sign of an }lim-e-Haqqaani is Divine Fear. The sign of Divine Fear is obedience to the Shariah. In the absence of obedience to the Shariah, understand that Divine Fear is non-existent.

A knowledge which is accompanied by worldly desire, flattery of worldly people, acquisition of only the world, pride, distant and great hopes, and neglect of the Hereafter is not Ilm. Such an }lim is not among the Inheritors of the Ambiyaa.

If along with knowledge you have the Fear of Allah, then only will it benefit you. Minus this Fear, the knowledge will be harmful for you.

The Knowledge accomoanied by the Fear of Allah – the meaning of which has already been explained – will prove beneficial in this world and in the }khirat (Hereafter). The knowledge which is shorn of this quality will be harmful in this world and the }khirat.

There is a difference between the Ulama-e-Haqq and those who are not among the Ulama-e-Haqq. While Divine Fear is the attribute of the former,

the latter are devoid of it. They are proud and arrogant on account of their (superficial) knowledge.

THE SECOND CHAPTER ON TAUBAH (REPENTANCE)

How is it possible for the heart to become celestially illumined (munawwar) when the forms and images of aliens have become engraved on the mirror of the heart? How is it possible for such a heart to journey towards Allah Ta'ala while it is fettered in the prison of lustful desires? In fact, how can such a heart ever entertain the hope of entering the Divine Presence while it has not purified itself of the impurities of its neglect? How is it possible for this heart to entertain the hope of comprehending the subtleties of the spiritual mysteries when it refuses to abstain from its improper acts?

How can a heart become illumined when it has been penetrated by worldly wealth, worldly reputation, offspring, property, idle thoughts and false hopes? When the darkness of the phantoms is dispelled from the heart, Noor will then settle in the heart.

The heart which night and day is fettered in the chains of nafsaani desires, thinking only of food, garments and wives, cannot advance towards Allah Ta'ala because its feet are tied with chains.

The heart which has not been cleansed of the impurities of neglect (ghaflat) and perpetually dwells in negligence, having forgotten the }khirat, cannot enter into the lofty Divine Presence. How can such a heart be granted acceptance in such a pure Court?

Just as an impure (napaak) person is not permitted entry into a Musjid, so too is a heart which has not been purified of the impurities of ghaflat denied entry into the Divine Presence. Such a heart is not granted Divine Acceptance.

The heart which is engrossed in despicable acts, futility and baseless hopes cannot entertain the desire to comprehend the mysteries and subtleties of Allah Ta'ala. When it has repented of its futility, then only will it be endowed with the ability to understand Divine Mysteries.

If His (Allah's) justice has to be the determinant, then no sin can be described as Sagheerah (minor), and if His grace be considered then no sin will be Kabeerah (major).

Should Allah's attribute of Adl (Justice) be manifested on earth, dealing with us strictly in terms of justice, then even the most insignificant error will not be Sagheerah, every act of sin will be Kabeerah and a punishable offence because the slightest disobedience to such a majestic and great Lord and Benefactor whose grandeur is infinite and whose bounties are innumerable, justifies the punishment of complete destruction of the disobedient one.

On the other hand, if His grace is manifested, then our greatest sins too, wane into oblivion and become insignificant and are forgiven.

When you commit some sin do not despair of attaining closeness with your Rabb because, perhaps this is the last sin destined for you.

When you commit some sin as a result of human nature, never allow this sin to bring about the slightest change in your determination to remain steadfast on the Deen and do not permit it to slacken your bond with Allah Ta'ala. Do not be deceived by the thought: 'I am unable to remain steadfast on the Deen, hence my sinning.' Do not think that firmness on the Deen is impossible on account of the sin committed. With this idea, do not become audacious in sin. This idea which you entertain is baseless because a sin committed as a result of the weakness in human nature is not in conflict with firmness on the Deen. Yes, persistence in sins, abstention from taubah and deliberate commission of sin are negatory of firmness (Istiqaamat).

It is quite possible that the sin committed may be the last decreed for you and thereafter such mercy may be directed to you, that you will commit no further sin.

For the heart not to grieve when Taa-aat (acts of obedience) and Ibaadaat (acts of worship) are lost, and not to feel remorse when indulging in sin and evil, is a sign of the death of the heart.

Know that just as the life of the physical body is dependent on food, so too is the life of the (spiritual) heart dependent on Imaan and A'maal-e-Saalihah (Righteous Deeds). In the same way as the physical body would perish if deprived of nourishment, the heart will die if it is without Imaan. Thus, if a man is unconcerned about his neglect of obedience, e.g. Namaaz, Roza (fasting), Jama't Salaat, etc., and he experiences no regret and remorse for the sins he commits, it indicates that his heart is dead, devoid of the impressions of Imaan.

If the heart derives pleasure from acts of obedience and worship, and grieves and feels regret when sins are committed it indicates that the Noor of Imaan is radiating.

> There should not be in your mind any sin so grave that it prevents you from holding a good opinion of hope with Allah Ta'ala and causes you to despair of His mercy and grace. He who has recognised his Rabb knows that infront of his Rabb's grace and mercy, his sins are insignificant.

One should not hold one's sins in such a grave light that one loses hope in the grace and mercy of Allah Ta'ala. One should not think: "The gravity of my sin is so great that there is no forgiveness for it, and I have on account of this sin now reached a stage where I am unfit for His grace and mercy." Such despair is the consequence of unawareness of the attributes of Allah Ta'ala.

One who has recognised his Creator and is aware of His attributes, will be acquainted with His attributes of Forgiveness and Grace. He will thus understand that in the presence of these infinite attributes, his sins are insignificant. He will always have hopes of being forgiven.

While this should be one's attitude, one should not consider sin itself to be insignificant. If the gravity of sin is not in the heart, one will then not resort to taubah nor will there be regret and remorse.

The summary of this discussion is: Neither consider the sin in such grave light that one despairs and loses hope in forgiveness, for this too is kufr, nor

regard sin so lightly that one feels no remorse and is deprived of taubah. The hope of forgiveness should be tempered with regret for having sinned, and a firm resolution should be made to refrain from disobedience in future.

THE THIRD CHAPTER ON IKHLAAS (SINCERITY) IN ACTIONS

The deeds of the servants are the external forms while Ikhlaas is the soul (rooh) for deeds.

The righteous deeds of the bandah, e.g. Salaat, Saum, Hajj, Zakaat, etc., devoid of ikhlaas are like a dead body without soul. Ikhlaas, i.e. the opposite of riya (show) and nafsaani desire, and their elimination from an action, is like the rooh and life. If the action is accompanied by ikhlaas, it will have life in it. On the contrary, if the action is devoid of ikhlaas and is rendered to show others or to derive personal pleasure, it will be like a lifeless body without benefit in the }khirah.

During the spiritual sojourn (Sulook) at the time of the revelation (kashf) of ma-aarif and mysteries, and manifestation of celestial illumination (anwaar), the Saalik's intention is not to halt. Reality (Haqeeqatul Amr) calls out to him: "Your Goal lies ahead." The external beauty of worldly things is revealed and it attracts the Saalik, but their realties loudly proclaim: "We are a trial. Do not be ungrateful by indulging in us."

When the servants of Allah, while traversing the spiritual sojourn engages in thikr, fikr and muraaqabah (contemplation), and numerous kinds of mysteries and realities cascade on their hearts, then on account of the spiritual ecstasy they experience, they engross themselves in these states thinking that this is the goal (maqsood) of Sulook whereas this is not so. Divine Guidance (Taufeeq-e-Ilaahi) and the Kaamil Murshid's shadow are at hand (to guide the saalik on towards the Goal of Divine Pleasure).

It is inspired into his heart: "Your Goal is ahead. Don't halt here. Advance! These conditions and states which you are experiencing are creations like yourself. They are not the Creator, your Goal is Khaaliq Ta'ala."

Similarly, the external beauty of worldly objects by being revealed to the Saalik, attracts him to them (worldly objects). If deviation has been decreed for him or if he lacks the company of a Kaamil Murshid, he becomes entrapped in these worldly objects. He regards these worldly allurements as the medium for the attainment of the Goal.

If Divine Guidance comes to aid, the reality of the objects of this transitory world become manifest to him and they (the hidden realities of worldly objects) loudly call out to him: "We have been created by Allah Ta'ala as a trial for you. Do not be ungrateful to your Creator, Allah Ta'ala by engrossing yourself in us. Proceed ahead of us."

> Do not intend to travel from one creation to another creation, for then you will become like the ass operating the grinding stone. The point which is the beginning of its sojourn will also be the end of its sojourn. Rather, travel from makhluqaat (created objects) to Khaaliq (The Creator). Allah Ta'ala says:
>
> "Undoubtedly, the end (of Sulook) is your Rabb."

The Maqsood-e-Asli (True Goal) of the Searcher of Allah is Allah. His gaze must be focused on his Master in everything. The purpose of all acts of ibaadaat, thikr and shaghl is the diversion of the Saalik's gaze from all things besides Allah so that the heart becomes absorbed in the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala.

Thus, if a man of the world abandons the world, engrossing himself in ibaadat, thikr and shaghl to convey to others that he is a man of piety and a saint, he has in fact abandoned one object of creation to involve himself in another object of creation. In other words, he abandoned wealth for the sake of name and fame. It is clear that those whose acclaim he seeks are all creations.

If the Saalik's maqsood (goal) is thawaab, lofty ranks and acquisition of spiritual pleasure, then although these are lawful, it does not behove the Searcher of Allah to hanker after these. This too is a journey from one creation, viz. abandoning the world, to another creation, viz. reward and lofty ranks. The journey of even this Saalik is not towards Allah Ta'ala. He

remains stagnated to the point from whence he commenced his sojourn because thawaab, lofty ranks and fame are all common in being entities other than Allah Ta'ala. Such a Saalik is like the ass driving the mill, in that he walks in a circle. He does not traverse any distance. Similarly, is the Saalik who abandons one object of creation for another. He remains in the circle of creation without covering even a cubit in distance towards Khaaliq.

The Saalik should therefore abandon all creation whether it be the world, thawaab or some lofty spiritual rank. He should leave them all behind and travel towards his Master. Allah Ta'ala says:

"Undoubtedly, the end (of the Journey) is until your Rabb."

Therefore, act according to the exhortation of this aayat and fix Maalik-e-Haqeeqi (The True Master) as your Final Goal. Colour yourself with this hue.

Keeping in mind the statement of Rasulullah (ﷺ), viz.:
"He whose migration is towards Allah and His Rasool, is truly heading towards Allah and His Rasool, and whoever migrates towards the objects of the world, his migration is in the direction he has contemplated." If you are a man of intelligence and understanding then contemplate the meaning of this statement of Rasulullah (ﷺ), viz.,
"Thus, his migration is towards the object he has intended his migration."

This hadith is proof for the aforementioned contention. The meaning of the hadith is that whoever has left his homeland sincerely for the sake of Allah and His Rasool, his migration is valid. On the other hand, if the purpose of the migration is worldly gain or a woman, then such a migration is for the world. It will have no share or gain in the }khirat.

In the same way, if the aim of the Saalik's thikr, shaghl and ibaadat is the derivation of spiritual pleasure or name and fame, then this will be the limit of his attainment. He will not attain Divine Proximity. If he abandons everything and fixes his gaze on Allah Ta'ala, then this will be the Maqsood he will attain.

In the Divine Court there is no act which is more acceptable than such an act which is out of the mind and which you regard as insignificant.

The deed which has greater acceptance by Allah Ta'ala is an act which the bandah understands to be from Allah. He discerns it with his heart and does not attribute it to himself, but viewing it with the heart's eyes, he says: "If Allah Ta'ala does not wish that I render this deed, never will I be able to accomplish it." He should not regard this deed as being of such significance whereby he can gain Divine Proximity. On the contrary, he should consider it not worthy of acceptance in view of it emanating from himself. Such a deed finds ready acceptance in the Divine Court.

Do not be vain on account of acts of obedience, labouring under the notion that such deeds are the effects of your willpower and choice. But, be happy thinking that you have been able to render the good deeds solely on account of the mercy, grace and ability granted by Allah Ta'ala. In this regard Allah Ta'ala says:
"Say: It is by the grace and decree of Allah. Thus be pleased with this."

When the bandah gives vent to exhilaration and feels proud of his acts of worship, thinking that he has rendered these by virtue of his choice and will, then he will be guilty of displaying ingratitude. The happiness of the bandah on account of having practised righteousness should be because he knows that he was able to render the deed by virtue of Allah's grace, mercy and aid. He thus expresses his shukr (gratitude) to Allah Ta'ala Who had enabled him to execute the deed of virtue. In this regard, Allah Ta'ala commanded:

"O Muhammad! Say, be pleased with only the grace and mercy of Allah. Do not be pleased with something else."

When the bandah deals in cash regarding his acts of obedience, Allah does not respond with a credit reward, i.e. He does not delay the reward until Qiyaamah.

It is not the attitude of a generous person to extract work and delay payment of the wages. Thus, Kareem-e-Haqeeqi (The One Who is truly generous and munificent) – Jalle Shaanuhu – to a greater degree will not

behave ungenerously. He does not delay compensation for the bandah's deeds until Qiyaamah. He grants the reward for Taa-at (obedience) here in this world. The reward comprises of the sweetness the heart tastes in Ibaadat and Thikr, and the variety of secrets, mysteries and subtleties which He bestows. In comparison to this reward, the bandah regards the kingdom of the world as dust.

This immediate compensation is a very insignificant sample of the reward he will receive in the }khirat. The reality of the bestowals of the }khirat is beyond description.

As a compensation in this world for acts of obedience, it is sufficient that your Master has become pleased to consider you fit for Taa-at.

The worldly reward for Taa-at is also limitless. Among these, the greatest reward for you, the Saalik, is that Ahkamul Haakimeen and the King of kings has become pleased to choose you for rendering obedience to Him. You are, in fact, nothing. You are a contemptible slave and a pure non-entity. When a king in the world extracts some service from a man, he feels proud of it because he has gained a rank. Whether he receives anything more, is not of importance. The attainment of a rank in proximity to the king is adequate for him.

The ilhaamaat (inspirations) which descend on their hearts and the opening up of the Doors of the Pleasure of supplication are adequate cash compensation for those who practise righteous deeds.

The bounties which are bestowed here in this world to those who practise virtue are the variety of inspirations which cascade into their hearts from the Divine Court at the time of enacting righteousness. They experience spiritual pleasure from these Ilhaamaat. Furthermore, vistas of the pleasure of supplication are opened in their hearts. As a result of the bond of love which Allah Ta'ala bestows to them, the bounties of the world recede into oblivion.

He who worships Allah for the attainment of thawaab (reward) or for salvation from athaab (punishment), has not discharged the haq (right) of Allah's attributes of excellence, splendour and grandeur.

If the bandah's purpose in rendering ibaadat is the acquisition of Jannat and salvation from Jahannum, then, Insha'Allah, he will achieve these goals. However, he has desired personal pleasure by way of ibaadat. He thus remains trapped in the web of the nafs, he has not discharged the right of Allah's lofty attributes.

The bandah's attributes of excellence (kamaal) is that his ibaadat should be purely for Allah's greatness and glory, not because of the desire for Jannat and the fear of Jahannum. The duty of the slave is to serve, whether the master favours or rebuffs him.

When you are motivated by reward for any good act, then you will be questioned regarding Sidq and Ikhlaas in the deed. You will then be uncertain regarding Ikhlaas. It is adequate for the uncertain one to be safe from Divine Punishment for his useless and defective deed.

If the intention underlying ibaadat and virtuous deeds is the acquisition of compensation from Allah Ta'ala, then Allah Ta'ala will point out to him that only a deed accomplished by Ikhlaas is rewardable. It will be said:

"When you have practised this deed for the sake of compensation, it was not rendered solely for Me. On the contrary, it was done for the sake of your nafs."

Thus, the bandah will be in doubt regarding the existence of Ikhlaas. If Ikhlaas was certain, he would not have rendered the deed in expectation of compensation. For such a person it will suffice that he is not apprehended by Allah Ta'ala. The hope of thawaab is thus left aside.

You are not the actual demonstrator of your deeds, therefore, do not expect reward for any of your acts. An ample reward for your deeds is that they are

accorded acceptance and you are not apprehended for rendering them (defectively).

It should be understood that Allah Ta'ala is the Faa-il-e-Haqeeqi (True Actor) of all actions. Therefore, in ibaadat the bandah's gaze should be on Allah Ta'ala. He should understand that Allah Ta'ala has created the act and it is His favour (Ihsaan).

Since the bandah is not the creator of his good deeds, it is highly improper for him to desire compensation. Therefore, if he is in the pursuit of reward, Ikhlaas will be negated. It is more than enough that the True Master accepts the deeds, grants reward and does not punish. In fact, the bandah deserves to be apprehended.

At the time of taa-at and ibaadat you are more in need of Divine Kindness than what you are in need thereof at the time of sin and disobedience.

The excellence and loftiness of the bandah are in his awareness that the actual Maqsood of all ibaadaat is only Allah Ta'ala. Thus, at all time in all acts his gaze is focussed on Allah Ta'ala like a beggar soliciting food from a benefactor. His action, deed and even his existence are completely out of his sight. His reliance is only on Allah Ta'ala. The heart derives solace from only Him and the direction of his heart is only Him. There remains absolutely no trust on one's efforts and plans.

The contemptibly and destruction of the bandah are brought about when his attention turns to his nafs and he becomes pleased with his deeds. Thus, he begins to value himself. When the bandah develops this disposition, he is expelled from the Divine Court and becomes accursed.

Now understand that when the servant sins, he is in need of Allah's kindness, for if he is denied Divine Kindness, Allah's punishment will overtake him. He, therefore, requests Divine Kindness to avoid being apprehended and to secure pardon for his sins.

Since Taa-at (obedience) and Ibaadaat (worship) are, in fact, Divine Pleasure (Ridha-e-Ilaahi), the issue of Kindness does not arise. Kindness is required when an act is rendered in conflict with Divine Pleasure. Nevertheless, frequently the opposite materializes, i.e. the need of Divine Kindness at the time of Taa-at is greater than at the time of sin. The explanation of this (paradoxical) claim is as follows:

It is the natural disposition of the Mu'min to be raked by remorse after commission of a sin. He becomes overwhelmed by regret, grief and self-contempt. He despises and detests his own nafs. He gains greater humility and he hastens to supplicate for forgiveness in the Divine Court. In this pitiable state, his gaze is not on his effort and deed (of taubah). The attitude of complete dependence on Allah's Kindness becomes ingrained in his heart. He is fully aware that besides Allah's grace, mercy and kindness, there is no other refuge for him. This attribute which he has subsequently developed is the objective which has to be cultivated. This attribute (of absolute humility) is in fact, the bandah's excellence.

On the other hand, sometimes after Taa-at and Ibaadaat, the bandah's gaze falls on his deeds. He then becomes vain, considering himself an obedient servant and an aabid (pious worshipper). He feels that he has discharged Allah's rights, hence he believes that he deserves to be rewarded. In this state his gaze is on his effort and he ceases to rely on Allah's grace and mercy. Therefore, it will not be surprising if Allah's Wrath settles on him and he thus becomes the object of Divine Displeasure. Thus, on the occasion of this type of Taa-at (which leads to vanity), the bandah stands in greater need of Divine Kindness than his need at the time of sinning.

Frequently, subtle and obscure riyaa (show) enters from an avenue which others cannot perceive.

Riyaa (show, ostentation) is to render an act of Ibaadat or some other virtuous deed with the motive of creating an impression on others so that they consider one a pious and saintly person.

If a person commences an act of worship, e.g. Namaaz, in the presence of people or in the absence of people who later arrive, and solely to create the

impression of piety, the person adorns his Namaaz, discharging it beautifully, then this type of show will belong to the overt kind of riyaa (riyaa zaahiri). Everyone understands this type of riyaa.

Sometimes a person renders an act in privacy, no one being present to see him. Notwithstanding this privacy, riyaa then too enter his heart. This kind of riyaa is extremely subtle. The sign of this riyaa is man's desire to be honoured when he meets others; that he be appointed to a position of prominence and leadership and that others serve him. When he is honoured, he becomes elated. When such honour is not forthcoming from the people, he is stung with surprise. This attitude indicates that this person's efforts and deeds are motivated by the desire for name and fame, and to gain service from people.

Your desire that people learn of your deeds and your baatini (spiritual) states, is proof of the lack of truth in your worship.

Truth in Uboodiyat (the state of worship) is the diversion of the gaze from all things besides Allah. The attention of the bandah should turn solely to Allah Ta'ala. If the bandah possess this attribute, he will be true.

If he desires people to become informed of his pious acts and his special spiritual conditions, and he adopts various methods for publicising these, he should know that he is not true. This very desire is proof for his insincerity.

Contemplate the Divine Gaze of Grace on you and banish the thought of the attention of people. Be concerned with the attention Allah Ta'ala gives you and do not turn yourself towards the attention of people.

The disposition of the sincere bandah is such that the pleasure and displeasure of people are irrelevant to him. He has no care for it. Since the Gaze of Divine Mercy is perpetually on him, he is oblivious of the attention others accord him. To him it is irrelevant whether people honour or dishonour him and whether they respect or despise him. His heart attaches no importance to their attention. On the contrary, he contemplates on the Divine Attention which is on him at all times, considering it an invaluable treasure.

Being in possession of this great treasure, he cannever divert his gaze to others.

It is simple to understand that if a man is under the care and protection of the king who caters for all his requirements, then this person will have no care for the attention of others. The Gaze of Ahkamul Haakimeen is with us every moment of our lives. Every minute He showers on us a variety of bounties. Inspite of His limitless kindness, if our gaze still turns towards others, then there can be no worst ingrates than us. In consequence of such ingratitude, the punishment should be the snatching away of all the bounties, but in view of His boundless mercy, He overlooks our ingratitude.

Just as Allah Jall-e-Ala dislikes a deed of partnership, i.e. adulterated by riyaa, so too does he dislike a heart of partnership, i.e. in which exists the love of others as well. He neither excepts a deed of partnership nor grants reward for it.

Mushtarak (partnership) Deed is a deed contaminated with riyaa (to show others). In it others have been made partners. Allah Ta'ala does not love such a deed. Similarly, Qalb-e-Mushtarak (a heart of partnership) is a heart in which is found the love of others. Allah Ta'ala does not love such a heart. Allah Ta'ala loves the heart which contains only His Love.

The deed which is calculated to gain the attention (and pleasure) of others is neither accepted nor rewarded by Allah Ta'ala. Only deeds devoid of riyaa are acceptable to him.

You will become the slave of the object you love. Allah Ta'ala dislikes that you become the slave of any object besides Him.

On earth when man loves any object besides Allah, he becomes its slave because a deep and strong relationship builds up with the object of love. Separation from the object of love produces grief and sorrow. This then, is the meaning of enslavement to the object of one's love. Some become the slaves of gold and some are enslaved to their wives and children.

It should, however, be understood that the love of worldly objects which is detestable is such a love which induces the bandah to ignore the law of the Shariah. He devotes himself wholeheartedly to his object of love even if such love leads to violation of the laws of the Shariah. If priority is accorded to the demands of the Shariah, thus keeping the love subservient, then the natural love one has for children and relatives is not abominable. In fact, it is Sunnat.

A lover is not a person who desires remuneration from his beloved nor is he motivated by the desire to gain something. A true lover (Muhibb-e-Haqeeqi) spends everything to gain the pleasure of his beloved. He who expects his beloved to spend on him is not a muhibb-e-haqeeqi.

The Mahboob-e-Haqeeqi (object of Love) of all servants is Haqq Ta'ala. The Mu'min is His muhib (lover), hence Allah Ta'ala says:

"Those who have Imaan are deeply in love with Allah."

Thus, the Mu'min who desires compensation, viz. Jannat, states of spiritual ecstasy, sweetness, mysteries and subtleties for his acts of ibaadat is not a true muhib. The true muhib desires nothing besides the pleasure of the Mahboob. In fact, the true muhib sacrifices his life and body – whatever he possesses – for the pleasure of his Mahboob.

How can you demand compensation for a deed which is His bestowal? How can you expect to be remunerated for the gift of rectitude He grants you?

You can expect compensation for a deed which you had rendered for the benefit of a person and in which there is no benefit for you. The good deed the bandah renders is for his own benefit. There is absolutely no benefit in it for the Gracious Master. He is entirely independent and does not require any benefit from the bandah's worship.

The acts of virtue, the rectitude and the sincerity of the bandah are all bestowals and charity conferred by the Gracious Master (Maula-e-Kareem). Indeed, it is very surprising, unintelligent and absurd to expect to be

remunerated for the gifts He bestows to you. How can a faqeer (beggar) who acquires charity from a person turn around and demand the benefactor to compensate him? The absurdity is self-evident.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER ON NAMAAZ

Namaaz-e-Haqeeqi (True Namaaz) purifies the heart from the pollution of aliens and opens up the door of spiritual mysteries (asraar). Namaaz is the substratum (mahl) for secret discussion and the abode of love and sincerity. During Namaaz the fields of the heart expand for spiritual mysteries and the stars of celestial light (Anwaar) dazzle therein.

The hearts of the chosen servants of Allah are perpetually absorbed in His remembrance. However, association with people and tending to natural needs produce a kind of ghaflat (carelessness) and a relationship with beings other than Allah. As a result, the hearts become contaminated. But when they engross themselves in Namaaz, their hearts are cleansed of the foreign pollution. The Divine Perception is then again restored to their hearts in accordance with their respective ranks.

When the foreign veils are removed from their hearts, thus eliminating the impediments, the doors of hidden Divine Mysteries and the secrets of Divine Knowledge open up on their hearts during Namaaz. Thus, their Namaaz becomes the substratum for communion with their Rabb. Their hearts becomes imbued with sincerity and love, leaving no room whatever for anything besides Allah.

Their hearts expand for the intake of Divine Mysteries. There remains then not the slightest vestige of fear or constriction in their hearts. For these illustrious servants, anwaar (celestial illumination) glitter like stars in their Namaaz. They perceive this illumination with the eyes of the heart.

Every Mu'min should strive to perform such Namaaz (as described above).

When Allah Jalle Shaanuhu discerned the strain you experience in ibaadat, he designed a variety of different acts of ibaadat for you. When he saw enthusiasm for ibaadat, he forbade you therefrom because your concern

should be with perfection of Namaaz, not only with the external form of Namaaz. Every performer of Namaaz does not perform it with perfection.

Man of weak constitution (by nature) tires of doing the same act for a length of time. Prolonged performance makes the act difficult. His heart feels no strain in a variety of acts. He is therefore, better equipped to accomplish them. It should be understood that it is incumbent on the bandah to perpetually apply himself to the worship of Allah.

In view of this disposition of man, Allah Ta'ala designed a variety of acts of ibaadat for him. He has not decreed perpetual observation of any one act of ibaadat because the bandah would tire of it, e.g. if it was decreed that the bandah be in the state of Namaaz at all times, certainly he would become exhausted. The heart of the bandah now remains in ibaadat on account of the variety of the acts of ibaadat such as Namaaz, Tilaawat, Hajj, Zakaat, Qur'baani, Roza, Thikr, etc. His heart does not become bored because the taste of every ibaadat is different.

In this way, the entire time is spent in ibaadat without the bandah tiring and becoming bored. He, therefore, does not abandon ibaadat.

In opposition to the condition of tiring and becoming bored, is the trait of greed and enthusiasm. When this trait exceeds the limit, the act is corrupted. For example, when there is extreme enthusiasm for Namaaz, it will be difficult to discharge it with all its rights, e.g. extreme enthusiasm will cause him to refrain form wudhu (so that he remains engrossed in Namaaz), or he will recite the Qur'aan hastily without humility and reflection. In view of this disposition in man, Allah Ta'ala has forbidden him from Namaaz and other ibaadaat at certain times so that man does not plunge headlong on any deed in haste and with excessive enthusiasm. He has decreed Namaaz at appointed times so that the bandah resolves to execute it with perfection. Haste and enthusiasm lead to only the external form of Namaaz. Between the form and the perfect Namaaz, there is a great difference.

In view of your weakness, Allah Ta'ala has reduced the number of Namaaz and knowing your need for His grace, He has increased His aid and thawaab.

He has reduced the number from fifty to five while awarding thawaab for fifty.

On the night of Mi'raj initially fifty Namaaz were made obligatory. On the repeated request of Rasulullah (ﷺ) the number was reduced to five. The reduction was granted on account of our weakness. We would not have been able to steadfastly perform fifty Namaaz daily. Since man is in need of Allah's grace, the thawaab of fifty Namaaz was retained.

Worship has been decreed at appointed times to ensure that laziness and uncertainty do not constitute obstacles. The time for ibaadat has been extended so that you enjoy some choice and latitude.

Allah Ta'ala has fixed times for the acts of ibaadat which He has decreed obligatory, e.g. Namaaz and Roza. If these acts are performed within the prescribed limits of the time, they will be fulfilled. If the time lapses, the ibaadat is lost.

If fixed times were not prescribed for ibaadat and if its performance was left to our discretion and choice, laziness would have set in. We would have said:

"As soon as I am over with this work, I shall perform Namaaz."

Or we would have performed the Namaaz of several months in a couple of days. In this way the ibaadat would be lost.

The time fixed for Namaaz is not so short that one is obliged to perform it immediately on the entry of the time otherwise it would become qadha. On the contrary, the time has been so extended to entertain your free choice. You may perform it at any time during the duration of the valid time. The benefit and wisdom for this are to ensure our serenity for the ibaadat. At the approach of the time we may make preparations for Namaaz in peace and without haste. The extended time enables us to terminate our other activities in an orderly manner in preparation for Namaaz. These benefits would have been lost if extended times were not granted for Namaaz. Namaaz would then

have been performed hastily and without peace of mind. The soul of Namaaz, viz. Hudhoor-e-Qalb (concentration / presence of the heart) would then have been non-existent.

> **In view of man's natural propensity of failing in the correct execution of his duties of worship, Allah Ta'ala has enchained him by decreeing worship obligatory on him. In other words, Allah Ta'ala has driven man towards His obedience with the chains of His compulsion. Your Rabb indicates surprise at those people who reach Jannat fettered in chains.**

In every state and circumstance, worship for Allah Ta'ala and the display of Uboodiyat (the state of slavery) are imperative and incumbent on the servants of Allah. This is the demand of intelligence whether Allah Ta'ala decrees ibaadat obligatory on us or not, because the duty of the slave is slavery regardless of whether his master commands him or not. But, on account of man's indolence and defects regarding the rendition of ibaadat, Allah Ta'ala, out of His boundless mercy, decreed the duties of ibaadat obligatory on His servants. Along with this He notified them of His Promise of Jannat for His obedience. He further warned the transgressors of the chastisement of Jahannum.

The similitude of this imposition (of ibaadat as a waajib duty) is like a chain which is tied around the neck of a prisoner. The prisoner is taken by means of the chain in any direction one desires irrespective of the prisoner's wishes. Similarly, by decreeing Taa-at (Obedience) waajib, Allah Ta'ala draws the indolent ones towards worship and obedience. He does so precisely on account of His mercy and love, just as a guardian trains and punishes his ward who perpetrates wrong. He does not permit the child unbridled freedom to do as he pleases. The child is thus compelled to do duties he dislikes and to abandon detestable characteristics whether he likes it or not.

It is surprising that some servants have to be drawn towards Jannat by means of chains. In other words, they find it difficult to render A'maal-e-Saalihah (righteous deeds). Since these deeds have been imposed on them as compulsory duties they oppose their desires in the execution of righteousness and gain entry into Jannat.

While ostensibly Taa-at and Khidmat have been decreed obligatory on you, in reality your entry into Jannat has been made incumbent and ensured.

In appearance Allah Ta'ala has made obedience and service to Him compulsory. This conveys the impression that Allah Ta'ala derives benefit from the bandah's obedience and service whereas He is independent and is in no need of anything. The benefit of Ibaadat accrues to us. Thus, the imposition of ibaadat on us is in actual fact ensuring our entry into Jannat. Sunhaanallah! How boundless is His Rahmat!

Regarding the statement of Rasulullah (ﷺ), "The coolness of my eyes has been put in Salaat.", it was asked: 'Is this rank exclusive with Rasulullah (ﷺ) or do others to enjoy a share in it?'

In reply, the author said: "Undoubtedly, the coolness of the eyes and the pleasure of the heart which are derived from the perception (mushaahadah) of the beauty, splendour and grandeur of Allah Ta'ala, are in proportion to the deeper knowledge (irfaan) which the heart has of Mash-hud-e-Haqeeqi (The True Being of Perception). No one's irfaan is equal to the irfaan of Rasulullah (ﷺ). Therefore, no one can experience coolness of the eyes to the degree of Rasulullah's experience."

The reason for our contention that the coolness of Rasulullah's eyes is on account of the perception (mushaahadah) of Jalaal-e-Mash'hood (Divine). By these G?µ ??? ? Beauty), is Rasulullah's own statement, "in Salaat" (words he has indicated what we have contended. He did not say, "with) because the coolness of his eyes could not be possible G?µ ??Salaat" (without his Rabb. How could it be possible when he guided others to this stage? Also, by means of his instruction, "Worship Allah as if you are seeing Him", he is commanding others to acquire this lofty stage. The vision of Allah accompanied by perception of anything besides Allah is an impossibility.

If someone argues that the coolness of the eyes in Namaaz is sometimes on account of the grace and favour of Allah Ta'ala, why then will the eyes not be cooled as a result (of the Divine Favour)? In fact, Allah Ta'ala, Himself says:

'Say – Be pleased only with the grace and mercy of Allah.',

then understand that for the one who reflects on the mysteries and subtleties of (Allah's) Kalaam, this very aayat indicates the answer (for the above argument). The aayat says:

"On this, people become pleased."

The aayat does not say:

'O Muhammad! You be pleased on it.'

The meaning thus is: 'Instruct the people to be pleased with Allah's grace and favour.' This meaning is also indicated in another aayat which says:

"Say (O Muhammad! I am pleased with Him.), then leave them playing in their futility."

Rasulullah (ﷺ) had said: "The coolness of my eyes has been put in Salaa
In other words: 'I experience great pleasure and happiness in Salaa

Someone had asked the author whether this rank was exclusive with Rasulullah (ﷺ) or do others too have a share in this experience? In reply the author (rahmatullah alayh) said that coolness of the eyes, happiness and pleasure of the heart in Namaaz are experienced as a result of perceiving Divine Beauty and Splendour. This is experienced by the Ahl-e-Ma'rifat (the Auliya of lofty ranks). The pleasure experienced in Namaaz will be in proportion to the ma'rifat which one possesses of Allah Ta'ala. It is apparent that Rasulullah's ma'rifat surpasses the ma'rifat of all, hence, he experienced greater pleasure and coolness of the eyes than everyone else.

This answer means that pleasure and coolness of the eyes in Namaaz are not exclusive with Rasulullah (ﷺ), but others too enjoy this experience in lesser degree according to their ranks.

This pleasure and coolness of the eyes are experienced in Namaaz by a man who is not afflicted with nafsaani and shaitaani thoughts. A man who is

afflicted with such thoughts will not experience coolness of the eyes in Namaaz.

It was contended that the cause of Rasulullah (ﷺ) experiencing pleasure and coolness of the eyes in Namaaz was his perception of Allah and not because of the Namaaz itself. The reason for this contention is that the Hadith

??? ??? ?? ??? ??? ???

indicates this because it is said:

"In Namaaz is the coolness of my eyes."

In other words, while *in* the state of Namaaz Rasulullah (ﷺ) derived pleasure on account of Divine Perception. He did not say: "The coolness of my eyes is *with* Namaaz," because such coolness was not attainable from ghairullah (objects besides Allah). It is evident that Namaaz itself is also ghairullah. How is it possible for Rasulullah's eyes to find coolness in ghairullah when he, himself has instructed us to worship Allah Ta'ala in such a manner as if we are seeing Him?

When the servant attains this stage, there remains then nothing for him other than Allah. His attention is completely diverted from all others. Even his actions and existence pale into annihilation. Since Namaaz is an act of the bandah, it too is ghairullah (an object besides Allah). As such it becomes oblivious to him. At that time (in Namaaz) the coolness of the eyes and spiritual pleasure are experienced only because of Divine Presence.

It is argued that coolness of the eyes and spiritual pleasure are attainable from Namaaz itself because Namaaz is the consequence of Allah's grace and mercy, hence the bandah who is in love with Allah will necessary derive spiritual pleasure from the performance of Namaaz. Furthermore, pleasure with Allah's fadhl (kindness, grace) has been commanded by Allah Ta'ala. He thus says (in the Qur'aan):

"Say (O Muhammad!) They should be happy with the fadhl and rahmat of Allah."

In view of Namaaz also being Allah’s fadhl and rahmat, there will be happiness and pleasure in it.

The answer to this argument is:
The aayat (quoted above for this argument), itself indicates the answer. The instruction is that the people should be pleased with only fadhl and rahmat. The aayat does not command:
“O Muhammad! Become happy with it.”

Thus, the meaning of this answer is that while people become happy with the fadhl, rahmat and ihsaan (favour) of Allah, you, O Muhammad, should be happy with Allah Himself. This view is substantiated elsewhere (in the Qur’aan) where the instruction is:

“Say (O Muhammad!) Allah! Then leave them to play in their conjecture.”
In other words: “Say that I am pleased with Allah.” Then leave them to pl in their conjecture.”

THE FIFTH CHAPTER ON SOLITUDE AND ASCETICISM

Nothing is more beneficial for the heart than solitude accompanied by contemplation on the Attributes and Bounties of Allah.

Association with people in general and unnecessary association in particular, keeps the focus of the heart on the people. The heart's gaze is diverted from Khaaliq Ta'ala Shaanhu. Ghaflat (negligence) increases further. In most cases the cause of ghaflat is mingling with people.

When the Saalik takes to solitude, the people are out of his sight. The searcher of Allah then necessarily turns his gaze towards Allah Ta'ala. Hence, for the heart to gain Divine Proximity (Qurb) nothing is more efficacious than solitude. However, it is necessary in this solitude to meditate on the Attributes and Bounties of Allah Ta'ala.

Bury yourself in the field of anonymity. The seed which is not buried underground will not develop and flourish.

The dearest wish of man's nafs is to be held in honour and esteem by others. Man thus pursues name and fame. This characteristic is a highway robber in the Path leading to Allah. It is absolutely negatory of sincerity and truth. The aim is worshipping and serving Allah. Greatness is the right of only Allah Ta'ala. Therefore, the duty of the bandah is to humble himself and hold himself in contempt in the Divine Court.

Therefore, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) says that you should bury yourself in anonymity which is like the ground, i.e. make yourself lost, unknown and humble. The seed which is not planted under the soil will not grow and flourish. Similarly, if man does not bury him in the field of anonymity, but remains in the pursuit of name and fame, he will not attain spiritual excellence and perfection. He will remain defective.

Allah has concealed the anwaar of the hearts of his Auliya in the dense veils of their external states so that they remain safe from the disgrace of publicity. He thus saves them from fame.

The hearts of those who are blessed with Divine Proximity and Divine Presence are radiant with innumerable rays of thikr and ibaadat. Their hearts are illumined with these celestial rays. However, Allah Ta'ala has concealed illumination of their hearts with dense veils of materialism, e.g. eating, drinking, walking, sitting, etc.

Externally, He has made them to resemble the masses by their indulgence in worldly activities. Thus, the difference between these Auliya and the masses is indiscernible. These external worldly states act like thick veils which conceal the anwaar (celestial illumination) of Allah's Auliya from the eyes of men. But those whose baatini (spiritual) gaze is sharp, recognise these anwaar even behind the veils while the general public cannever discern these rays of celestial illumination because their physical vision cannot penetrate these veils. They therefore echo the statement which the kuffaar made to the Nabi:

"You are but a man like us."

Allah has hidden these anwaar exuding from the Auliya so that their honour is maintained. He has protected them from the disgrace of publicity, for if these anwaar had to become known to the general public, it would have been on the tongues of all and sundry. Such publicity is dishonourable and in conflict with the dignity and honour of Allah Ta'ala. Mentioning in public even the name of a modest, chaste and beautiful lady protected behind her Purdah, is dishonourable on account of her high degree of modesty and honour. This then is the similitude for the anwaar of the Auliya concealed behind dense worldly veils.

If this system of concealment did not exist, these anwaar of the Auliya would have become fully manifest. Their radiation of illumination would have predominated to such a degree that the external material veils would disappear from even the physical vision of worldly people.

Glory unto That Being Who has hidden Divine Mysteries and subtleties behind the veils of human attributes which are manifested. And (Glory unto Him) Who has manifested for His servants the splendour of His Rububiyat (Godhood, Divinity) by revealing the effects (aathaar) of their Uboodiyat (state of worship and slavery).

The meaning of this statement is similar to the aforementioned observation.

Others are unaware of the mysteries and subtleties which Allah Ta'ala reveals to His close servants. This spiritual treasure is concealed from the gaze of the public. The veils of physical attributes have been cast over these anwaar.

Concealing these anwaar is an extremely marvellous act. These anwaar are infinite in number and are of such supreme quality that if even a single spark had to appear on earth, the light of the sun and moon would become dull and the light of this single spark would permeate from east to west. Inspite of their infinity and quality, Allah Ta'ala has concealed this vast, boundless ocean of illumination in a cup. In other words, He has concealed these boundless anwaar in man who is constituted of a handful of sand. There, thus, appears in the physical gaze of man only this handful of sand or its physical effects, viz. its material and mundane attributes and activities such as man's movement and rest, his eating, sleeping and working. In view of this marvellous act of Allah, the author expresses his wonder and amazement by proclaiming, Subhaanallah! (Glory to Allah!)

His power is indeed wonderful and marvellous. When He desires to biyat) to His ?display the greatness and splendour of His Divinity (Rub servants, then He does so by revealing the effects of the Uboodiyat (slavery) of His servants. The effects of Uboodiyat are those states of the servants, which draw their attention to Allah Ta'ala. Such states are sickness, poverty, hardships, etc. When the bandah is afflicted with these conditions, he is compelled to turn towards his Creator. He supplicates for the removal of the hardships and he humbles himself. In such circumstances he develops

firmness in faith and understands well that he, most certainly, has a Creator Who is All-Powerful.

In the absence of these effects, the greatness of Allah would not have become manifest for His servants, because they would be perpetually dwelling in their personal whims and fancies. The servants of Allah would then have been deprived of this inner knowledge (ma'rifat).

Also, That Pure Being has fixed the same Path which leads to Him as the Path which leads to His Auliya. He leads to His Auliya only those whom He leads to Himself.

Allah Ta'ala conceals His Pure Being (Zaat) from our gaze, behind the veils of His creation. The earth, heavens, the moon, the sun, the stars, the qaat (created ?animal kingdom, the plant kingdom, man, etc. are His makhl things). Inspite of the Zaat of Khaaliq (The Creator) being conspicuously manifest, He is hidden from our sight. In fact, He remains so concealed that some brainless people even deny His existence. Those on whom the grace of Allah settled, acknowledge His Unity and accepted belief in the Messengership (Risaalat) of His Messengers.

Those who are favoured with Allah's Special Grace, He bestows to them a share of His Ma'rifat. Thus, the medium for the acquisition of Allah's Ma'rifat and the Path leading to the Divine Court are His Special Grace. There is no other way or method for this attainment.

The author then expresses his amazement saying that He (Allah) is Pure and, in fact, Purity belongs only to Him. The cause of the author's amazement is the fact that the method which Allah has fixed for His recognition (Ma'rifat), has also been fixed for the recognition of His Auliya. Just as Allah Ta'ala has concealed Himself in the veils of His physical creation, so too has He hidden His Auliya behind the veils of their mundane conditions such as their movement, rest, eating, sleeping, etc. And, just as Allah has fixed His Fadhl-e-Khaas (Special Grace) as the way for attaining Him, has He fixed His Fadhl-e-Khaas as the way of recognising His Auliya. Only those who are favoured with Divine Grace will recognise the Auliya.

Every person is not blessed with Ma'rifat nor is every person guided to the Auliya. Some Auliya even aver that it is more difficult to recognise the Auliya than Allah Ta'ala. In view of Allah's Beauty (Jamaal) and Splendour (Jalaal) being conspicuously manifest in creation, it is relatively easier to recognise Him than to recognise a Wali. A wali resembles all others in mundane acts and attributes, hence it is difficult to recognise him.

The author then says that Allah leads to His Auliya those whom He leads to Himself. In other words, when Allah Ta'ala desires a man to reach Him, He blesses him with the love, recognition and special companionship of the Auliya. The wisdom underlying this system is that the Auliya are Allah's beloved. Those who love one's beloved are also beloved.

Thus, when a person loves the Auliya it indicates that Allah loves him and that He will bestow His Ma'rifat to him.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER ON THE IMPORTANCE OF TIME

Not a moment of your time passes without some command of Allah being attached to it for you, be it obedience or sin, favour or disfavour, materializing.

Every act which Allah Ta'ala has decreed for man at every breath of his, will materialize whether the act be one of obedience or sin or a ni'mat (bounty) or difficulty. This means that man is perpetually in a state which is pleasing or displeasing to his nafs. If it is pleasing, it will be a ni'mat on condition that it is not a sin. If it is displeasing, it will be a calamity on condition that it is not the effort of an act of obedience.

Of these two states, one state or the other applies at all times with man. Sometimes it is the state of pleasure and sometimes the state of displeasure.

Every state (haalat) has a right (haq) which man has to incumbently discharge. The haq of a ni'mat is shukr and the haq of the state of museebat (calamity) is sabr. It is, therefore, imperative for the bandah to be saabir (patient) or shaakir (grateful) every moment of his life. Thus, he should not destroy even one minute of his life.

Do not wait for a time free from alien influences because it (i.e. waiting) will keep you aloof from His meditation and remembrance in the state in which you are.

When the fadhl (grace) of Allah Ta'ala focuses on the Saalik, his heart establishes a connection with Thikrullah. Thereafter, sometimes the condition of his engrossment in Thikr is such that his heart becomes completely emptied of all things besides Allah. However, sometimes the contamination of mundane affairs and activities dominates him. Due to involvement in worldly affairs, the original state of Thikr in the heart is overshadowed. The Saalik becomes terrified and desires to extricate himself from this state of perplexity. Much of his time is then spent in this desire. He waits in

anticipation of a time which will be free from all this pollution so that he could engage peacefully in Thikr.

The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) advises the Saalik not to wait for such a free time in order to resume Thikr. Even the state of zulmat (spiritual darkness) and kudoorat (spiritual pollution) in which the True Rabb has cast you, is a time. If in this time granted to you, you are going to involve your heart with the concern of the elimination of the pollution before engaging in Thikr, then this concern will prevent you from the meditation and remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. This time will be squandered in ghaflat (negligence, inertia).

Hence, banish the idea of waiting for a time devoid of contamination. Think that this is the only available time and that there is no other time because one has no certainty regarding the future. Thus, become engrossed with your Master in this very time of pollution and darkness.

Someone asked Sahl (radhiyallahu anhu):
"When does the faqeer attain comfort?"

He replied:
"The faqeer attains comfort when he knows that the time which has passed over him is the only time."

When this knowledge becomes grounded in the Saalik, the pollution and the confusion will be dispelled. In reality, this advice of the Shaikh is the remedy for these contaminations.

The aforementioned discussion will apply if the Shaikh's advice is intended for the Saalik who is involved in thikr and shaghl (spiritual exercises). Nevertheless, this advice can also apply to people who are ensnared in the world. Generally, people involved in the world wait for a time when they will be freed from the encumbrances of a certain activity. They deceive themselves by believing that on the accomplishment of a particular activity, they will be free to apply themselves to the remembrance of Allah. But after accomplishing one worldly activity, they commence

another. There is no end to the hopes and desires of the nafs. The entire life is squandered without achieving a time to devote to the remembrance of Allah.

For such people of the world, the Shaikh's advice will also be applicable. They should not wait for a time when they will be free of worldly encumbrances. They should immediately engage themselves in the remembrance of their Maula (Master) regardless of worry and disturbance. Allah Ta'ala will Himself dispel the state of worry and agitation from the heart.

To delay the rendition of virtuous deeds until availability of free time is of the stupidities of your nafs.

This statement is similar to the aforementioned advice. When man becomes involved in worldly affairs, there is no end to its ramifications. When there is no end to man's worldly indulgences, it is simply the indolence and stupidity of his nafs to postpone A'maal-e-Saalihah (righteous deeds), moral reformation and spiritual upliftment for the future under the notion of obtaining a time devoid of worldly affairs.

Man destroys his present time and in his stupidity waits for a time, the acquisition of which is uncertain. Life comes to an end without the obtainal of free time. Maut (Death) makes a sudden appearance.

An intelligent man, therefore, is he who values the time he has obtained. He does not postpone the work (of Thikr, etc.) for a later time nor does he wait in anticipation of free time, the attainment of which is impossible.

If the worldly affairs are permissible activities, continue therewith and involve yourself simultaneously in Thikrullah and A'maal-e-Saalihah. If these affairs are unlawful, abandon them.

Obligatory Huqooq (Rights) such as obligatory acts of ibaadat, if not tendered (in their respective times) can be offered as qadha. But, it is impossible to make qadha (i.e. offer compensation) of baatini (spiritual) affairs and the

spiritual acts of the heart (Waaridaat-e-Qalbiyah). These acts and affairs are the huqooq of time. Once omitted, fulfilment is not possible because their is no such time in which some new right or command of Allah Ta'ala does not become incumbent. When you are unable to discharge the Haq of Allah in its time, how is it possible to discharge the rights of others in that time?

There are two kinds of rights devolving on the bandah. The first kind pertains to Ibaadaat. These rights become obligatory at fixed times, e.g. Namaaz, Roza. If these rights are not discharged at their appointed times, it is possible to redeem them by executing these acts of Ibaadat at some other time (by making qadha).

The second kind are the Huqooq of time. These Huqooq apply at every moment. There is no separate fixed time set out for them since these are the rights of time itself and the existence of time is perpetual, i.e. at all times.

Time in this context refers to the states (halaat) which occur to the bandah perpetually in succession. These haalat are of four kinds: Ni'mat (Bounty), Museebat (Calamity), Taa-at (Obedience) and Ma'siyat (Sin). At any given time the bandah will certainly be in one of these four states. The rights of these four haalaat are termed Huqooq-e-Auqaat.

The Haq of Ni'mat is Shukr. The Haq of Museebat is Sabr. The Haq of Taa-at is Mushaahadah (Perception) of Allah's Fadhl (Grace). The Haq of Ma'siyat is Taubah and Istighfaar.

No such time will be found in which some Haq has not devolved on the bandah. Therefore, if these rights are not honoured, compensation (making qadhaa) for them is not possible. Qadhaa is to utilise some of one's own time to discharge an ibaadat which was not rendered at its appointed time. However, in regard to the second kind of Huqooq Qadhaa is not possible because in the time which you set aside for the qadhaa of these Huqooq, some other right of Allah among the four rights mentioned above, devolves on you. Every moment Shukr, or Sabr or Mushaahadah Fadhl or Taubah becomes incumbent. Thus, their is no time available for the discharge of the Huqooq of time which have been missed.

Now when you have been unable to discharge Allah's Haqq pertaining to the time, how will it be possible for you to fulfil the right of another person, which you did not discharge at its time? When every moment involving the discharge of some right of Allah (one of the four rights), it follows that when you will choose a particular time for rendering the unfulfilled right of others, you will be abandoning the Huqooq of Allah pertaining to Auqaat (Time).

It is, therefore, imperative that the bandah never neglects the Haq of time. At every breath, he should fulfil the haq of time. It is for this reason that the Pious Seniors have said:

"The Sufi is the Son of Time".

In other words, he is fully and perpetually engrossed in the discharge of the rights of Time.

There is no compensation for age which has passed. The existing age is priceless.

No compensation can ever be offered for man's age which has expired. Therefore, if the past age was spent in futility, devoid of Ibaadat and A'maal-e-Saalihah, nothing can now be offered to make good the loss.

On the other hand, the time which one obtains at present, is priceless. The entire earth with all its possessions cannot buy it because by virtue of existing time, the bandah can secure everlasting happiness for him. It is precisely on this account that the Salf-e-Saaliheen (The illustrious Saints of former times) treasured their breathing (taking a constant reckoning of every breath). Never would they destroy a single moment.

According to the Hadith, the moment of the bandah spent in ghaflat (inertia) will be a cause of regret for him. But at that time regret and remorse will be of no avail.

If you do not turn towards Allah Ta'ala even after having withdrawn from all other activities and when obstacles have lessened, then this is complete disgrace and misfortune.

It does not matter to what extent man is involved in worldly affairs and in the execution of his family duties, he is under obligation at all time to turn to Allah and remember Him. Ibaadat is obligatory on him in all circumstances. It is, therefore, essential that he casts behind his back the redundant affairs of the world and contents himself with basic needs. He should incumbently set aside time for his Maula (Master).

If all his time is consumed in worldly matters, leaving no time for building up a capital for the }khirat, then indeed, the bandah will find himself in complete disgrace and total loss. It will be his greatest misfortune. His excuse of not being able to find time, will not be acceptable in Qiyaamat.

If a man inspite of having sufficient means which relieve him of all or of a great number of worldly involvements does not turn to the remembrance of Allah nor applies himself in the spiritual process of building up his treasure for the Hereafter but, on the contrary, ruins his life in forgetfulness, play and amusement, then his disgrace, misfortune and destruction are multiplied manifold. Indeed, his plight is most pitiable. He had acquired the priceless treasure of Time and then had destroyed it. Alas!

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER ON THE THIKR OF ALLAH

Do not abandon Thikr on account of lack of concentration. Abandoning Thikr is worse than lack of concentration while making Thikr. It is not far-fetched (to say) that Allah Ta'ala may develop your Thikr-e-Ghaflat (Thikr devoid of concentration) to Thikr-e-Bêdaari (Thikr with alertness) and your Thikr-e-Bêdaari to Thikr-e-Hudhoori (Thikr in the Divine Presence) and from this Thikr to that (most lofty state of) Thikr in which everything besides Mathkoor-e-Haqeeqi (Allah Ta'ala – The True Object of Remembrance), is annihilated. Nothing is difficult for Allah Ta'ala.

Many Thaakireen (those involved in Thikr) complain of lack of concentration in their Thikr and the incidence of waswasah (stray thoughts). Some even abandon Thikr on this account. The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) advising such persons, says that the Thaakir should not abandon Thikr because of lack of concentration. The lack of concentration is only one calamity. But at least the existence of Thikr is with the Thaakir even though it is accompanied by ghaflat. But in the event of abandoning Thikr, it will not be simply Thikr without concentration, but the loss of Thikr itself. This state of having abandoned Thikr is, therefore, extremely grave. Thikr even with ghaflat is far superior than the abandonment of Thikr.

In the former state (i.e. Thikr without concentration) although the heart is negligent, at least the tongue is involved with Thikr. In the second state, both tongue and heart are ghaafil (inert), having abandoned the Thikr of Allah Ta'ala. Even verbal Thikr is a valuable treasure. When the tongue is saved from Jahannum, will the remaining parts of the body not be saved? *(Most certainly they will be saved. – Translator.)*

Providing encouragement, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) further adds that it is quite possible that Allah Ta'ala may improve the quality of your Thikr. The initial Thikr without concentration can progress to the stage where concentration will be achieved and wasaawis cease. It will then be the Thikr of wakefulness and concentration. In this stage of Thikr, the heart will not drift towards the wasaawis (stray thoughts) of the nafs. The verbal Thikr at

this time will keep the heart alert. The Thaakir will then perceive pleasure in his verbal Thikr.

The progress will then continue to the stage where the condition of Hudhoori accompanies the Thikr. In Thikr-e-Bêdaari, the achievement is only the heart's attention to the verbal Thikr. The heart is awake and does not incline to wasaawis. In Thikr-e-Hudhoori, Thikr becomes the attribute of the heart just as seeing is the attribute of the eye. Thus, Thikr becomes the permanent attribute of the heart. It becomes inseparable from the heart.

However, in this stage, the heart does perceive itself to be in possession of the attribute of Thikr. The Saalik in this state is conscious of his Thikr being with concentration.

It is then not surprising if Allah Ta'ala elevates the Thaakir to a higher stage of Thikr. He may rise in his Thikr from Thikr-e-Hudhoori to such a lofty stage where the heart becomes entirely oblivious of all things besides Mathkoor-e-Haqeeqi – Allah Ta'ala, The True Object of Thikr. Everything else is annihilated. In other words, Thikr predominates the Thaakir to such . He has no perception ? ?? ?an extent that his entire being is permeated by of him being involved in Thikr nor is he aware of his presence in front of Allah Ta'ala. Perception of even such a presence is a kind of ghaflat. Even this perception is an object besides Allah, hence in the highest stage of Thikr, it too perishes and is assigned to the realm of oblivion. It enters the domain .? ???? of other deities which are negated in the Thikr of

If someone expresses amazement, thinking that such a lofty stage is not attainable *(by people of our lowly calibre – Translator),* the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) provides the answer for this doubt. He says that the attainment of this stage will be well nigh impossible by one's own efforts. This attainment is the consequence of Allah's Fadhl. It is not difficult on Him to bestow His Fadhl to anyone. Therefore, do not despair.

Allah Ta'ala has honoured you in three ways. First, he made you His Thaakir. If it was not for His Fadhl, never would it have been possible for you to involve your tongue and heart in His Thikr. Second, He establishes His

relationship with you, thereby making you (the Saalik) the object of remembrance of others. They, therefore, remember you with titles such as Waliullah and Safiullah. Third, by mentioning you (in the celestial realms of the Angels), He has made you His Mathkoor (Object of remembrance). He has, thus completed His Favour for you.

Here the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) is addressing the obedient Thaakir. He says that Allah Ta'ala has conferred on you three honours. These honours collectively constitute a limitless treasure of goodness and excellance for you. Allah's mercy and favour have been thus bestowed to you in perfection.

The very first honour He has bestowed to you is the fact that He has enabled you to remember Him, hence you are able to engross yourself in His Thikr. With your tongue, limbs and heart you remember Him. If it was not for His Fadhl, then your tongue and heart would never have been able to render the Thikr of Ahkamul Haakimeen. You would not have been qualified to worship the King of all kings because deficiency, inertia and indolence are inherent in your nature. Furthermore, there are others more handsome than you in external appearance, yet He chose you. It is nothing other than His mercy and grace that while keeping millions of His creation in ghaflat, He applied you to His Thikr.

The second honour which He has conferred on you, is that He has related you to Him – People, therefore, remember you by virtue of this relationship. People regard you as the Wali (Friend) of Allah and as Safiullah (the chosen one of Allah). Indeed, this is a very high honour bestowed to you. If today, some puny worldly king confers a title on a man, he becomes bloated with happiness. His pleasure will be boundless. Now imagine the high state of the honour conferred on one when the True and Eternal King proclaims one to be His friend?

The third honour He has conferred on you is that He, Himself remembers you. The Hadith states that Rasulullah (ﷺ) said:

Allah said:

'Whoever remembers Me in his heart, I too remember him in My Heart and whoever remembers Me in a gathering, I remember

Him in a gathering which is nobler than his gathering (i.e. the gathering of the Angels)."

It is learnt from this Hadith, that Allah Ta'ala remembers the Thaakir Bandah. In fact, He says in His Qur'aan:
"Remember Me and I shall remember you."

What greater honour can there be? The bandah constituted of a handful of sand is remembered by the True King, the Lord of all lords, the Sovereign of creation! Therefore, O Thaakir, understand that by having conferred on you these three honours, Allah has perfected His Favour for you.

Zaahir Thikr does not occur without Baatini Mushaahadah.

The ibaadat, taa-at and thikr of the bandah, which become manifest in this world are the consequence of the manifestation of Allah's Unity and perception of realities which Allah Ta'ala had caused his rooh to experience before entering this ephemeral world. The rooh of the bandah had already experienced the ibaadat, taa-at and thikr by way of baatini mushaahadah prior to its entry into this world. These are, thus, the effects of that earlier spiritual perception even though the bandah is unaware thereof.

The reason for this unawareness is the domination of the effects of the physical body over the soul. However, Allah Ta'ala bestows the knowledge of even that spiritual realm to whomever He pleases. He alienates all impediments to this awareness.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER ON FIKR (CONTEMPLATION)

The wandering of the heart in the spacious field of aliens is called fikr (contemplation).

qaat (created objects) – everything besides Khaaliq (The ?All makhl Creator) are termed aliens (aghyaar). All creation from the heaven to the earth has been portrayed or compared to spacious fields. The reality of fikr is the wandering of the heart in these spacious fields.

Wandering in these fields, in this context, means to contemplate the wonderful manifestations of Allah’s power (Qudrat) which reveals itself perpetually, at every moment, in His creation. Some are born while others die; some are poor while others are wealthy. There are innumerable marvels in His creation inhabiting the heavens and the earth. Man is required to derive lesson from these marvellous objects of creation and contemplate on Allah’s attributes of Beauty, Excellence and Splendour.

This contemplation will lead him to Khaaliq Ta’ala. He will firmly believe that his Creator is Most Wise, Most Gracious, Most Majestic and Most Splendid. This is the type of fikr which we are commanded to observe. We have been forbidden to contemplate on the Zaat (Being) of Khaaliq because out minds being finite cannot comprehend the Infinite, Eternal Zaat. In such contemplation lurks the danger of renouncing the Deen. We seek Allah’s protection. Belief in the Creator should be confined to the limits indicated to us.

Further, one should contemplate on obedience and sin – that for a certain act of obedience there is a particular thawaab and for a sin there is a certain degree of punishment.

Also, contemplate on the bounties of Allah. His bounties are innumerable and He is the true Benefactor.

Contemplate on the perishable nature of the world and its objects. These various types of fikr are praiseworthy and we have been instructed to observe them.

Fikr is the lamp of the heart. In its absence, the heart will be without light.

Fikr which has been explained, is for the heart like a lamp. Minus fikr, the heart resembles a dark room in which there is no lamp. One does not know what lurks in that dark room in which nothing is visible. Similarly, without contemplation the reality and true nature of an object will not be fathomed.

When man contemplates, the inner nature and reality of things will be revealed to him. He will see with open eyes (i.e. his spiritual eyes) the realities of Truth, Falsehood, the perishable nature of the world and the everlasting nature of the Hereafter. The Glory, Splendour, Power and Wrath of Allah, as well as Him being the True Benefactor will become vivid realities. Man will also become aware of his own hidden defects, the schemes and deceptions of his nafs and that the world is the abode of futility and deception.

If the bandah refrains from fikr, his heart will become like a dark room. He will then be unable to differentiate the various things.

There are two kinds of fikr. The fikr of Tasdeeq and Imaan, and the fikr of Mushaahadah and A'yaan. The first kind is for the Saalikeen and the second kind is for the people of Mushaahadah and Mu-aayanah, i.e. for the Majzubs.

b. ?The select servants of Allah are of two kinds – the Saalik and the Majz The one who logically deducts the cause from the effects is a Saalik. He contemplates on the effects and arrives at the knowledge of the cause. His heart initially wanders in the objects of Divine Creation. From this contemplation he reaches the way to the Divine Attributes. For example, he sees people transgressing without Allah Ta'ala punishing them. From this he concludes that Allah's attribute is Hilm (to refrain from punishing despite

having the power). From the beauty, excellence and perfection of objects, he infers that Allah is All-Wise.

By means of prolonged contemplation on the Names and Attributes of Allah, the heart finally discovers the way leading to the Divine Zaat. Thus, by contemplating on the effects, he ultimately reaches the Cause – Allah Ta'ala.

On the other hand, the one who concludes the effects by contemplating b. Initially, his heart becomes imbued with the ?on the Cause, is a Majz Mushaahadah of the Zaat. He then dwells in the Names and Attributes of qaat.?Allah. Finally, he enters into the contemplation of Makhl

b is ?Thus, while the Saalik is taken from the bottom to the top, the Majz brought down from the top to the bottom. This is the state of those whose bs remain in the state of Jazb ?perfection Allah Ta'ala desires. Some Majz while some Saaliks remain suspended without attaining accomplishment. *(In the state of Jazb the intellect is overwhelmed by Divine Love, hence the b is not liable for the execution of the Shariah's obligations which are ?Majz waived for him. – Translator)*

The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) says that there are two kinds of fikr. The first is known as the fikr of Tasdeeq and Imaan. This is the contemplation which is not the result of physical observation. Its basis is only Imaan.

The second kind of fikr is known as Muaa-yanah and Mushaahadah. In he first kind contemplation the Saalikeen reach Allah by their contemplative study of His created objects. They utilise their physical senses in the observation and contemplation of creation to conclude the greatness of the Creator. The aim of this fikr is the Mushaahadah (Perception) of the Pure Zaat of Allah Ta'ala. Its motivating force is not only Imaan. Its progression is not from the Creator to the creation, but from the creation to the Creator. Thus, the focus of his heart's gaze is initially on creation and ultimately on the Creator.

b dictates to him ?On the other hand, the knowledge possessed by the Majz the necessity of the existence of creation on account of the existence the Creator. The focus of his heart is initially on the Creator, later reaching creation. For this reason the Saalik is one whose senses and intellect are b generally acts in conflict with intelligence.?intact whereas the Majz

It should be understood that the knowledge derived from contemplation is inspirational. It is a bestowal of Allah Ta'ala. It is not acquired by one's efforts.

THE NINTH CHAPTER ON ZUHD (ASCETICISM) AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

Whatever act stems from the heart of a Taarik-e-Dunya is not little and whatever act the ghaafil attaches to the world, is not much.

(Taarik-e-Dunya: A man who has abandoned the love of the world. – Translator)

As long as hubb-e-dunya (love for the world) and hubb-e-jah (love for fame) dominate, ikhlaas (sincerity) will not develop in a'maal-e-saalihah (righteous deeds). Worldly motives and lustful desires will appear in every place and every deed of such a person.

Acceptance of deeds in the Divine Court occurs only when these deeds are devoid of these calamities. Even the Namaaz of a man dominated by worldly love is contaminated with some worldly motive. On the contrary, a bandah on whom Allah's Fadhl settles and whose nafs is purified from hubb-e-dunya, all his actions, whether pertaining to the Deen or the world, are based on Ikhlaas. His aim is Allah because the dunya (world) has been expelled from his heart. Hence, whatever deed is rendered by a Taarik-e-Dunya is not insignificant even if in quantity it appears slight. Although his deed may be quantitatively little, it is imbued with rooh (soul) and is accepted by Allah Ta'ala, hence it is very significant.

On the other hand the actions of a man whose heart is greedily set on the world and who is forgetful of Allah Ta'ala, are insignificant even if in appearance they are considerable and great because the aim of these deeds are not proper. The heart is contaminated with falsity, hence his deeds are not free of the calamities of show and base motives of the nafs and shaitaan even if he considers himself to be free of such ailments.

It is, therefore, of utmost importance to cleanse the heart of all things besides Allah Ta'ala. The heart should be purified and adorned with lofty

attributes so that the righteous deeds rendered are full of life and soul. Then, even if the deed is ostensibly small, in reality it will be great.

It is essential to understand, that righteous deeds should not be abandoned on account of the existence of these spiritual calamities in one. After all, rendering the deeds is better than abandoning them. Moreover, righteous deeds, if practised constantly, will ultimately produce Ikhlaas (even if initially Ikhlaas was lacking).

One should posses less worldly objects of pleasure, then things which bring grief will decrease.

In most cases the cause of man's grief and worry is the loss of worldly objects, e.g. loss of wealth and property. The possession of such objects, on the other hand, produces pleasure and comfort.

If anyone wished to decrease grief and worry, he should decrease his worldly possessions. He will then not posses things which will cause him grief. The greater man's worldly possessions, the greater will be his grief and sorrow. The heart will not find peace.

Thus, the intelligent man will content himself with necessary requirements and eliminate superfluous possessions. In this way he acquires the peace and comfort of both worlds.

If you desire to be saved from dismissal, then do not acquire the transitory kingdom of this world.

This statement is mentioned by the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) as an example of his former statement. The kingdom of the world has no true existence. It is transitory and perishable. Do not acquire it because you will be confronted with the grief of being dismissed from it. Even if you are not dismissed in worldly terms, Maut will ultimately tear you away from this kingdom. You will then suffer the grief of dismissal. Hence, abstain from the acquisition of this perishable kingdom.

If the establishment of the kingdom of the world inclines you towards it, then its cessation either with dismissal or death will disincline you from it. If its zaahir (external dimension) draws you to it, then its baatin (internal dimension) prevents you from it.

Initially pomp and pleasure of worldly kingdom appear magnificent and pleasing. Those who possess such kingdom appear honourable and noble in the estimate of others. Even their own nafs basks in delight. This initial pomp draws people to acquisition of worldly kingdom. However, the ultimate result is that either the ruler is dismissed during his lifetime or he is separated from it by death.

In most cases, governments do not observe the laws of the Shariah. Injustice and oppression appear to be their necessary attributes.

When dismissed, the ex-ruler will be overwhelmed with grief. When separated from his kingdom by death, sorrow will be his lot and on account of his oppression and the usurpation of the rights of people, he will be weighed down by mountains of regret. Thus, sorrow and regret will be his end. This regrettable end will disenchant him from his worldly kingdom (but then it will be too late).

While the zaahir of worldly kingdom is alluring with its ranks, wealth and comforts which lure man to it, its baatin diverts man from the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. It is, therefore, absolutely disastrous for one's happiness and success in the }khirat. This ultimate fate of the worldly kingdom should thus prevent you from hankering after it.

The intelligent man is far-sighted. He is not deceived by the external facade and initial stage of anything. His sight is set on reality and the ultimate result.

Allah Ta'ala has fixed the world as the abode of lesson and the mine of pollutions in order to turn you away from it.

Allah Ta'ala has made the world a place in which man should derive lesson and experience. He has also made it an abode of pollutions and worries. From the aweful and awesome episodes enacted night and day on earth, the intelligent man takes lesson and gains experience. From the terrible calamities and upheavals happening in the world, man gains admonition. No one is able to attain fulfilment of his wishes and goals. An ill man desires health, but sickness refuses to depart from him. A man wishes for wealth, but is overcome by poverty. In short, the world is the abode of worry and pollutions.

In the hardships, trials, tribulations and experiences of man there is considerable mercy of Allah Ta'ala. As a result of these trials, man becomes disenchanted from the world. By means of man's disinclination does Allah Ta'ala separate him from this carrion (i.e. the world).

Allah Ta'ala was aware that naseehat (good counsel) will not be sufficient for you. He therefore causes you to taste of the bitterness of worldly hardships, thereby simplifying your separation from the world.

Naseehat, the Qur'aan and Hadith are adequate for a man devoid of the love of the world and whose intelligence is correct. However, Allah was aware that the love of worldly pleasures and pollution is firmly entrenched in the hearts of numerous people. Their intelligence is deficient, hence Naseehat alone is not sufficient for them. He gives them a taste of worldly hardships and trials so that they become disillusioned with this carrion. Abandoning the world (worldly love), therefore, becomes a matter of ease.

There also are such people who fail to gain any lesson from difficulties and hardships. Nevertheless, numerous Muslims do turn towards Allah Ta'ala in consequence of the calamities which befall them. Thus, in relation to their former state of degeneration, they progress in the direction leading to Allah Ta'ala.

Tay-e-Haqeeqi means that with your spiritual vision you wrap up the earthly sojourn to such a degree that you discern Qiyaamat to be closer to you than your own self.

Tay-e-Haqeeqi is a type of karaamat (miracle) which Allah Ta'ala awards to His Friends. Some Auliya traverse huge distances in a minute miraculously. The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) conveys in this statement that traversing huge distances miraculously is not the aim nor something to hanker after. Traversing distances miraculously (Tay-e-Haqeeqi) is not necessarily the product of Wilaayat-e-Maqboolah (Sainthood accepted by Allah Ta'ala), i.e. if someone possesses the ability of travelling huge distances in minutes, it does not follow that he is necessarily an accepted Wali by Allah Ta'ala. It is quite possible that a man can acquire such powers by exercises known as riyaadhat even while he is not obedient to the Shariah. A seemingly miraculous deed displayed by an irreligious person is called Istidraaj. *(It is a demonstration which is facilitated by various satanic influences. – Translator).*

If a miraculous act is demonstrated by a true and accepted Saint, then too, it is not an aim to be pursued.

The true Haqeeqi Tay (or traversing of distance) is that you wrap up the distance of the world from in front of your heart, i.e. not only expel the love of the world from your heart, do not permit it to even pass near to your heart. Eliminate the love of the world so that Qiyaamah appears to be nearer to you than yourself. Qiyaamah will appear to the Saalik closer than his own existence because his existence being part of ghairullah (everything besides Allah), will be traversed by his heart.

The heart gains the ability to traverse the distance of the world when Allah Ta'ala inspires the bandah's heart with the Noor of Yaqeen. With the light radiated by the Noor of Yaqeen, the reality of

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(Say: Haq has arrived and baatil has perished.),

will dawn. At that time the world will be completely annihilated from the heart.

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"And, that is the Fadhl of Allah. He grants it to whomever He wishes. And that is not difficult on Allah."

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May Allah bestow it to us, }meen.

If the Noor of Yaqeen had to shine in you, then Aakhirat will be nearer to you than that nearness which a journey towards the Aakhirat brings about and then you would see with open eyes the blot of the perishable nature of the beauties of the world.

Allah and His Rasool have informed you that this world is transitory and an abode of falsehood and deception, and that the }khirat is everlasting, and the abode of truth. If you had firm belief (Yaqeen) in these truths and the light of this Yaqeen then permeates your heart enabling you to see that the promises of Allah and His Rasool are brighter than the sun, then the }khirat would have been in the very presence of your heart. The proximity of the }khirat would have been closer to your heart than that proximity resulting from the journey taken towards the }khirat.

A journey towards a place is undertaken when that place is situated at a distance. However, when that place is closer to you than your own nafs, there is no need to prepare for a journey and you would realise that the material things of the world with their external excellences and beauty are stamped with the blot of destruction. They all will perish.

The discernment of these realities is the result of the Noor of Yaqeen which is inspired into the heart. When it is inspired into the heart it makes the realities of things conspicuous. Every Muslim knows that the world is perishable and the }khirat everlasting. Every Muslim believes in the promises of Allah and His Rasool. But when the light of Yaqeen dawns in the heart, then these objects of our Imaan become as visible as the things seen by the physical eyes.

The effect of this discernment is that man will cast the world behind his back and all his efforts will be for the }khirat. The inordinate desires of his nafs will dissipate. He will treasure time.

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May Allah bestow it to us, }meen.

The external beauty and glitter of worldly things are deception. Their hidden realities are full of lesson and admonition. O nafs! You look at the external beauty while your heart should focus on the inner hidden realities.

The nafs becomes ensnared by the external beauty and glitter of worldly things and pursues these. In this pursuit he forgets the }khirat. But the inner realities of these things are full of lesson and warning.

This is applicable to everything on earth. While every earthly object is initially beautiful and pleasurable, its ultimate end is distasteful, and disgusting. As an example, consider the beginning and the end of food.

The worldly allurements cause man to even turn his back on to the Deen. If Allah's taufeeq is at hand and He bestows sound intelligence, the nafs is prevented from the superficial beauty and glitter of the world. The nothingness and ultimate extinction are kept in sight and man then does not plunge into these deceptions like the blind and deaf. He contents himself with needs. He leaves everything else and goes in search of the everlasting treasure.

If you desire everlasting honour, do not choose then an honour which will perish.

Worldly honour is wealth and fame. Both these are snatched away from man here in this earthly life or ultimately he is separated from them by Maut. Thus, this honour will end. If you acquired this honour while remaining uncaring and forgetful of your Master, then your honour will not endure because the basis of such honour is perishable.

True and everlasting honour is that the heart establishes no relationship with worldly objects. The heart is enriched by establishing a bond with the Eternal Being. If even the kingdom of the world is presented, the heart imbued with the Divine Bond will not be attracted to it. Compared to the kingdom of Ahkamul Haakimeen, the kingdom of the world is not equal to the wing of a mosquito.

Whoever therefore desires the true and everlasting honour, let him abandon the perishable honour of the world. This true honour will be with man even in this life while its full and perfect manifestation will be after death.

THE TENTH CHAPTER ON POVERTY

Poverty is the Eid of the Mureedeen.

Eid is the day of celebration and happiness. The happiness of man is in the attainment of his objects of desire. While the happiness of laymen is in food, garments, wealth and worldly honour, the happiness of the selected servants of Allah – those who have established a true bond with Allah – is in the denial of the desires of the nafs. When the objects of desire of the nafs are denied to it, it is the Eid of the mureedeen.

The basis of their happiness is a heart purified of the contaminations of all aliens – of all things besides Allah Ta'ala. Whenever the nafs acquires things of its desire, it turns towards them. Contamination then affects its purity. On the other hand, when the desires of the nafs are denied, it runs towards Allah Ta'ala. It then experiences peace and pleasure in this condition.

Poverty is in conflict with the desire of the nafs. Therefore, poverty is the Eid of the people of Allah.

Poverty being a festive occasion is the state of those who are climbing the ladder of spiritual progress. Although they have created a bond with Allah Ta'ala, they have not yet attained firmness and steadfastness. There still remains nafsaani urge in them. However, after perfection when the nafs has mounted the stage of Mutma-innah, every moment is its Eid. Adversity and prosperity are then equal. In whichever condition Allah maintains the nafs (after becoming Mutma-innah), it will be Eid.

(When the nafs has reached the highest stage of its development, it is described as Nafs Mutma-innah. – Translator).

In most cases, during starvation, such an abundance of anwaar and ma-aarif are acquired, which are not attained even in Namaaz and Roza.

The basis for the incidence of anwaar (celestial light), inspirational knowledge, Divine Mysteries and subtleties is denial of the desires of the nafs. Therefore, if Namaaz and Roza are executed after the desires of the nafs have been satisfied e.g., delicious food and fine garments etc., then in such a Namaaz and Roza there will not be such abundance of anwaar and spiritual mysteries as would cascade into the heart at the time of starvation and during conditions which are in conflict with the desires of the nafs.

Poverty is a blanket bestowed from the bestowals of Allah Ta'ala.

Poverty is a Divine Bestowal which is like a blanket. During periods of starvation they fill this blanket with the piles of gifts they Divinely Receive, i.e. during starvation they acquire numerous Divine Blessings in the form of anwaar, ma-aarif and asraar. Thus, the selected servants of Allah are not scared by poverty and starvation. On the contrary, their happiness is boundless.

If you know what the descent of Divine Bestowals means, then be pleased with poverty and starvation because Allah Ta'ala says that Sadqah is for the Fuqara.

The attribute of want and need is poverty. Cultivation of poverty thus means to cultivate the attribute of need and want in relation to your Master, Allah Ta'ala. At all times dependence must be on Allah. The heart should not develop independence on account of worldly possessions. Man's heart should not feel satisfied and independent because of wealth and children. Independence of the heart should be only by virtue of the Divine Bond.

If you desire the torrents of Divine Effulgence to rain down on you, then become wholly dependent on Him. When this state of need has become entrenched in your nafs, you will experience the wonder of His mysteries cascading on you. An ocean of Faidh-e-Baatini will flood onto you. The proof for this claim is Allah's statement:

"Verily, Sadaaqat is for the fuqara ..."

You will, therefore, receive the Sadqah of His Fuyoodh (Spiritual Gifts) only when you have imbued in you the attributes of faqr (poverty) which make you a faqeer entitled to receive the Divine Sadqah of Celestial Knowledge. At all times, even if you possess an abundance of worldly wealth, ingrain in yourself the attribute of dependence on Him. Always remain a beggar at His Door.

Your poverty is natural. The means (asbaab) of need and want which appear to you are simply to remind you of your natural state of poverty which lies hidden in you. Temporary factors cannot eliminate your natural poverty.

O Insaan! In your present existence and in your next existence after death, you will be perpetually dependent on your Khaaliq and Rabb. Therefore, remember that your faqr (poverty) and dependence are natural to your constitution. You are inseparable from this dependence for even a second.

However, here on earth, on account of the health, wealth and freewill granted to you, you have developed an independent attitude, forgetting your Creator and Sustained. You have thus become oblivious of your natural and inherent dependency on Allah Ta'ala. It is only on account of Divine Mercy that you are reminded of your natural attribute by way of the imposition of circumstances of difficulty and trial which constrain you to turn in supplication to your Creator. These conditions of hardship imply: "O Ihsaan! Why have you forgotten your origin?"

The selected servants of Allah always keep in mind this natural attribute of man's dependence on Allah Ta'ala. The difficulties and trials which come their way are not for reminding them of their dependence, but are for the elevation of their ranks.

All things which have deceived you into a false state of independence are temporary. Allah Ta'ala is at all times capable of snatching away these material possessions which are keeping you in deception. In fact, this often happens. When it happens, man's original state of dependence is exposed. He should, therefore, understand that his temporary and superficial facade of independence does not eliminate his natural and inherent state of absolute

dependence. Thus, employ your intelligence and remember your origin. Your welfare is in this.

In your time, a beautiful time is when you cogitate on your dependence and return to your state of humility and lowliness.

O Searcher of the Truth! The best moments in your life are the time which you spend in the contemplation of your actual and natural dependence. Taking lesson from this perception, you will return to your original state of humility which has become obscure to your heart.

Since man and entire creation are perpetually under Divine domination and subjugation, man should understand his lowliness, contempt and humility. He manipulates creation at His Will. True Power, Beauty and Splendour belong only to Him. If, therefore, the bandah gains the impression that he too possesses respect and honour, he will be a rebel. Chastisement for rebellion is self-evident.

It is not sufficient that man only acknowledges his dependence and humility. This mere knowledge is with everyone. The recognition of one's dependence should become a perpetual state permeating one's heart. The effect should at all times be on the heart. It should reach the stage of Yaqeen which precludes all doubt and uncertainty.

On the contrary, man's vilest time will be the moments in which he feels that he possesses the attributes of independence, excellence, rank and honour.

Do not spread your hands asking from creation unless you discern the giver giving to Your Maula-e-Haqeeqi (Allah Ta'ala). When you have attained this discernment then take from creation according to your zaahiri and baatini knowledge.

O Servant of Allah! Gifts awarded to you by people may be accepted on two conditions. One – You have reached such a state (of spiritual elevation) that you firmly believe that the actual giver is Allah Ta'ala and creation is the

medium only. Mere knowledge of this fact is not adequate because both Muslims and Kafirs believe that Allah is the Giver. Rather, the state of your heart should be such that you consciously feel that creation is not the giver under any circumstances. The gaze of the heart should not be on creation.

Two – When you have imbued in yourself the aforementioned condition, then accept the gift according to your zaahiri and baatini knowledge. Ilm-e-Zaahir refers to the Shariah. In other words, if the Shariah permits acceptance of the gift, accept it, otherwise refrain, e.g. the gift is presented by a person whose earnings are unlawful or the giver is a minor. If you have this knowledge regarding the giver, refuse acceptance of the gift.

Ilm-e-Baatin refers to the knowledge of your inner condition. If you have need for the object presented, accept only what you need and leave the excess. If, however, it is your intention to give the excess to others, you may accept it. Also, do not accept something which you have abandoned in the process of training your nafs for the sake of Allah Ta'ala, for perhaps Allah Ta'ala is sending it to you by way of trial.

Do not accept the gifts of proud people and of those who advertise their favours. Similarly, do not accept a gift from such a person whose presentation of a gift produces pressure on your heart for some reason or the other. These are examples of Ilm-e-Baatini. *(Another example is a gift which is anticipated. On seeing a particular person, the heart expects or anticipates him making a gift. It is not permissible for the Saalik to accept such a gift. This is termed Ishraafun Nafs. – Translator).*

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER ON THE EVILS OF THE NAFS AND OPPOSITION TO IT

Paying attention to your spiritual ailments is better than turning your gaze in the direction of attaining things which are out of your sight.

O Mureed! You are eager to discover hidden entities. You desire to know of the Divine Mysteries, secrets and subtleties. You consider these entities to be the Maqsood (Goal) or the introductory stage of the Maqsood. Remember that to incline the heart in this direction and to pursue these hidden entities are not for your welfare. In fact, this attitude is harmful for you. It is better for you to view your spiritual defects such as riya, hasad, takabbur, etc., and to concern yourself with their elimination.

If in the course of your spiritual journey some mystery is revealed to you, do not attach significance to it. Keep in mind that your purpose is the purification of your nafs from evil attributes.

Expel every human quality which stands in opposition to your worship (and obedience of Allah) so that you become one who answers the Call of Allah and gain His Proximity.

There are two kinds of human attributes – vice and virtue. The virtuous attributes (Ausaaf-e-Mahmoodah) are obedience, Imaan, humility, contentment, patience, etc. The evil attributes (Ausaaf-e-Mazmoomah) are classified into two categories. The first class is related to the physical limbs, e.g. back-biting, injustice, theft, etc. The second class of evil attributes is related to the heart, e.g. pride, vanity, jealously, etc.

Ausaaf-e-Mazmoomah are in conflict with worship and obedience. It is imperative to strive to eliminate these evil attributes. The heart will become adorned with the Ausaaf-e-Mahmoodah after it has been purified from the Ausaaf-e-Mazmoomah. Only then will man accept the baatini (inner) Call of Allah Ta'ala.

Allah Ta'ala constantly calls you to His obedience. The Qur'aan says:
"And Allah calls (you) to the Abode of Peace (Jannat)."

You should be one who truthfully acknowledges this Divine Call. You will then attain Divine Proximity. Without purification of the nafs from the evil qualities, you will not be able to truthfully answer His Call. In consequence, you will be deprived of Divine Proximity. A man who is soiled with impurities is unfit for presentation in the Royal Court.

The root of every sin, ghaflat (inertia); bestial desire is pleasure with one's nafs and the seed of every obedience; alertness and purity are displeasure with one's nafs.

When a man is pleased with his condition, then he is in fact pleased with his nafs, whether his state be good or bad. This pleasure with the nafs is the root of every evil, negligence and lowly nafsaani desire.

When a man in pleased with his nafs, its defects and evils will be concealed from his gaze. His own evil will also appear pleasing. His heart will feel safe and satisfied with his nafs. He will then become forgetful of Allah Ta'ala. In the wake of ghaflat (forgetfulness, neglect, inertia), wasaawis (stray satanic thoughts) and lustful desires will strike him with force. Sin will then be the result.

Being displeased with the state of one's nafs is the root of obedience, alertness and purity. When man is displeased with his nafs, he will always be alert. He will understand every trick and desire of this enemy. He will examine intelligently every demand of the nafs on the standard of the Shariah. Any demand he finds in conflict with the Shariah will be shunned.

In the initial stage, the struggle against the nafs is difficult. Sometimes the nafs will emerge victorious and sometimes it will be defeated. However, if the struggle (Mujaahadah) is maintained, the power if the nafs will gradually be neutralised and it will become content with the Shariah. It will then refrain

from rebellion. Purity and obedience will become its nature. Sin and inertia will be banished.

By Allah! Your companionship with a jaahil (ignoramus) who is displeased with his nafs is better than association with an Aalim who is pleased with his nafs. Of what benefit is his knowledge to him? And, what harm is the ignorance of an ignoramus who is dissatisfied with his nafs?

Since the benefit of an }lim's companionship and the harm of a jaahil's company are acknowledged facts, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) takes an oath and says that the companionship of such a man who although ignorant of book (external) knowledge, is displeased with his nafs, is superior to the companionship of an }lim who is satisfied with his nafs. The ignorant man (mentioned in this context) although lacking in academic knowledge, understands with conviction that his nafs is the embodiment of evil and defect. He does not commit the error of believing in having any excellences. Such a man is kaamil (spiritually perfect). He is not an ignoramus.

On the other hand if a man is contented with his nafs, then despite his qualifications in academic knowledge, his association will prove harmful. In him is the root of every evil, hence even if his zaahiri (academic) knowledge induces him to obey the Shariat, his moral state is dangerous. One cannot repose confidence in him. His spiritual disease will most certainly exercise its influence at some time. His companionship will harm whoever is in his association because the influence of companionship is an acknowledged fact. Such a person will be enamoured by his academic research and be pleased with himself. This is precisely ghaflat.

This disease (being satisfied with one's nafs) is extremely subtle. The one in whom it lurks is himself unable to detect it. The man who is always displeased with the state of his nafs regardless of how beautiful the condition of the nafs may appear, will not be harmed by ignorance. On the other hand, an }lim who is contented with his nafs and endeavours to acquire the pleasure of the people for his acts, his knowledge is of no benefit.

How is it possible for supernatural acts to emanate from you when you have not yet abandoned nafsaani habits.

Miraculous demonstrations or supernatural acts displayed by a man who is obedient to the Shariah and follows the Shariah meticulously, are called Karaamaat. If such acts are demonstrated by irreligious persons, they will be termed Istidraaj (which are satanic manifestations).

Many Saalikeen who suffer from the ailment of the desire for fame, hanker after Karaamaat. The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh), therefore, says when you, the mureed have not eliminated your evil attributes, how can you expect to display miracles? Karaamat is Divine Testimony for the Wilaayat (Sainthood) of a person. When the mureed is bogged down in lowly attributes, how can he expect Divine Testimony? He lacks in Wilaayat.

When the pleasure of lustful desires becomes entrenched in the heart, it becomes an incurable disease.

Some physical ailments deteriorate to the degree of incurability and the patient is rendered terminally ill. The case of spiritual ailments is similar.

Everyone is plagued with nafsaani desires and the desires for worldly pleasure. But when the pleasure of some lowly desire becomes ingrained in the heart, the disease becomes incurable. Imaan, Taa-at and Istighfaar– although these are remedies for spiritual ailments, are efficacious as long as the disease has not become ingrained in the heart. After entrenchment in the heart, only the Fadhl of Allah Ta'ala can eliminate it.

It is therefore, essential that the Saalik ensures from the very beginning that spiritual ailments do not become ingrained in the heart.

There is no fear of the paths of worship becoming obscure and confusing for you. But there is the danger of nafsaani love dominating you.

The paths of worship are the ways which are Allah's commands for the bandah at all times, e.g. For a ni'mat (bounty), shukr (gratitude) in

incumbent; for a calamity, sabr (patience) is essential; for disobedience, repentance and regret are necessary. The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) says, that there is not much fear of these ways becoming obscure and confusing for you because the Qur'aan, Hadith and the Books of Fiqh have explicitly explained these acts. The Ulama have simplified this with their expositions. Books, big and small, are available in abundance in every language. There is, therefore, no fear of the laws of Allah Ta'ala becoming obscure.

However, there exists the danger of nafsaani desire overwhelming you at the time of executing the commands of Allah. Such desire will prevent you from obeying the teachings of Allah and His Rasool, thus plunging you into sin, e.g. You become proud of the attainment of some bounty, hence you forget The True Benefactor (Mun'im-e-Haqeeqi). Or, at the time of calamity, the nafs overwhelms you and induces you to act in conflict with the Shariah.

Thus, of utmost importance is to remain submissive to Allah Ta'ala in every circumstance and condition which settles on you and to suppress the rebellion of the nafs.

People praise you on account of such Ausaaf-e-Hameedah (Praiseworthy attributes) which they believe are imbued within you. You should revile your nafs for the evil attributes in you.

Man is deceived by the praises which people laud on him on account of some attribute of excellence. Such praise produces ujub (vanity, self-esteem) in him. He then tends to forget his reality. It is for this reason that the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) says that people praise you for virtuous attributes which they imagine are in you. But, they in fact do not know if these imagined lofty attributes actually exist in you or not. If you are intelligent, you will not be deceived by their plots. Attribute their praises to their imagination while you should criticise and revile your nafs on account of the presence of evil attributes and bad habits. You do have irrefutable evidence, knowledge and experience of you own short-comings and evil qualities. Your knowledge of your evil attributes, therefore, is certain while of your good qualities, your knowledge is doubtful.

When the true Mu'min is praised, he feels embarrassed in front of Allah Ta'ala because he is being praised for an attribute which he cannot perceive with certitude in his nafs.

At all times the close servants of Allah have the perception of Allah Ta'ala. His Beauty, Excellence, Perfection and Grandeur are perpetually in view. In the presence of Allah, they have absolutely no existence. They believe themselves to be embodiments of deficiencies and evils. In relation to the Divine Presence they regard themselves to be non-existent.

In view of this conception, they feel highly embarrassed if praised, since they are aware of the non-existence of the attributes for which they are praised. However, the man who is ghaafil becomes puffed up with vanity believing that the praise is on account of some excellence which he most certainly possesses.

The greatest ignoramus is the man who forgets his proven evil attributes on account of the good qualities which people imagine to be in him.

Generally, people entertain a good opinion of a man and praise him. They conclude the existence of lofty attributes in a man from his behaviour, states and actions, e.g. when they see a man performing Namaaz with great care, they infer that he is a pious man (buzrug), even if all the attributes of sainthood are not found in him and even if his Namaaz abounds with satanic and nafsaani thoughts. Thus, the person who is delughted with the praise of imagined virtues in him while being blind to the certain defects in him, is the greatest ignoramus.

The stench of baatini evils is worse than the stench of physical putrefied matter. O ignoramus! How can you be pleased with such stench?

When your Maula (Master) activates the tongues of people with such praises which you do not deserve, then moisten your tongue with such praise which He deserves.

When people praise you, it in reality is the effect of Allah Ta'ala activating their tongues. If Allah Ta'ala employs the tongues of people to laud on you praises which you do not deserve, then it behoves you to offer such praise to That Pure Being, which is befitting to Him. Do not praise those who are praising you. Their praise in reality is Allah's veil of concealment (Sattaari) which hides your defects from others. Therefore, do not become trapped by the praises of people.

In sin the pleasure for the nafs is overt and in obedience the pleasure is covert. The remedy for an ailment which is hidden is difficult.

As long as the nafs has not reached the stage of Mut-mainnah, it will interfere in every act, be it taa-at (obedience) or ma'siyat (sin). Its interference in ma'siyat is plainly evident. The nafs derives full pleasure in sin. Despite its knowledge of Divine Chastisement, the nafs perpetrates the sin because of the pleasure it derives.

The nafs does not refrain from staking its claim of pleasure in even obedience. But, it is difficult to understand this plot of the nafs. It is generally understood that the nafs has no share in taa-at because obedience is difficult and detestable to the nafs, hence in conflict with its wishes. It should be well understood that inspite of the difficulty of taa-at, the nafs does derive pleasure therein. In some persons is found love for fame; in some is show (riya). Even if the ibaadat is performed initially with Ikhlaas (sincerity), the nafs contaminates it with riya and hubb-e-jah. Some people believe that the pleasure and sweetness experienced in ibaadat are the goal to strive for. The sign of this misconception is that the nafs induces man to rush towards the form of ibaadat in which it derives greater pleasure. It will constrain one to refrain from other types of ibaadat even if these are obligatory since it does not derive pleasure therein, e.g. a man performs Nafl Namaaz in abundance but refrains from paying Zakaat. He experiences pleasure in Nafl Namaaz, not so in Zakaat. This indicates that in his performance of Nafl Namaaz the nafs derives some pleasure and that this person searches for the pleasure of the nafs, not for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala. If he was interested in Allah's pleasure, he would not abstain from paying Zakaat.

Thus, the nafs has its share of pleasure even in ibaadat. Although the operation of the nafs in ibaadat is extremely well-concealed, the people of insight (the Mash~-ikh) are able to fathom it.

When an ailment is concealed, its remedy is difficult on account of diagnosis being difficult. When even awareness of the existence of the disease is lacking and the person is considered to be spiritually healthy, then the disease is incurable.

When there is ambiguity regarding two acts, making it difficult to decide the best option, then opt for the act which is more difficult on the nafs. The Haq is more difficult on the nafs.

When one experiences uncertainty in the choice of one of two Mustahab (meritorious) or Jaa-iz (lawful) acts, then it is necessary to reflect in order to establish which act is more difficult and displeasing to the nafs. Adopt the act which is more displeasing to the nafs. The act which is better for this person will be more difficult on the nafs.

The nature of the nafs is jahl (ignorance). It, therefore, always searches for things which are pleasurable to it while it flees from things which are beneficial for it.

The Hamd and Thana (Praises) of Allah Ta'ala prevent man from gratitude to his nafs and from honouring his nafs. The thought of fulfilling the Huqooq of Allah prevents from the remembrance of nafsaani pleasures.

Beautiful habits and virtuous attributes are purely the fadhl (grace) of Allah Ta'ala. When the bandah attributes his virtuous state to his nafs, he will be guilty of showing gratitude to his nafs, thereby honouring it. It does not behove the true Mu'min to do so.

The true and perfect Mu'min will recite the praise of Allah when goodness emanates from him because Allah Ta'ala is the True Actor. He is the Creator of all actions of man. The bandah is only the abode of

manifestation for Allah's acts of creation. He, therefore, should not attribute his virtuous deeds to his nafs.

When he offers Hamd and Thana to Allah Ta'ala, he will not view his virtues as the deeds of his nafs. Therefore, man should engross himself in proclaiming the praises of Allah Ta'ala and perpetually keep in mind the fulfilment of the Huqooq of Allah Ta'ala. He should not heed the pleasure of the nafs, i.e. in Ibaadat and Taa-aat he should not satisfy the desire of his nafs. The desire for Jannat, salvation from Jahannum and sweetness in worship should not be fixed as the goals of one's pursuit. If these objects are his goals, his sincerity will be contaminated. The duty of the slave is to serve his Master. He should not be motivated by personal pleasure and desires.

If there did not exist the fields of emotional (nafsaani) desires and pleasure, there would then not have been the journey of Sulook by which the Saalikeen travel towards Allah Ta'ala because there is no physical distance for you to traverse in order to reach Allah Ta'ala. In the physical sense there is no separation between Allah Ta'ala and yourself.

Literally the meaning of Sulook is to traverse a distance (physical distance). In the terminology of the Sufiyaa, Sulook means to overcome and abandon the emotional and bestial attributes and desires by means of Mujaahadah (struggle against the nafs), Riyaadhat (specially designed devotional exercises), Taa-aat (acts of obedience) and Thikrullah. Man's domination over his nafs should reach such a degree that observance of the laws of the Shariah becomes man's nature and the heart remains engrossed in the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. This stage of control and domination over the nafs is also called Wasl which means 'having reached Allah Ta'ala'.

The desires and pleasures of the nafs have been described as 'fields' because the nafs runs and operates in them. If man was without nafsaani desires, there would not have been the spiritual journey for the Saalikeen since the objective of Sulook or Sêr Ilallaah (Journeying to Allah) is to subjugate the desires of the nafs to the Law of Allah by way of Mujaahadah. The meaning of Sulook here is the spiritual sojourn towards Allah, not a physical journey. The literal meaning could only be applicable if there was

physical distance between man and Allah. But, Allah is not material or physical body and form.

Similarly, the meaning of Wasl with Allah Ta'ala also means the subjugation of the nafsaani promptings and desires.

The Qur'aanic verse:
"We are nearer to man than his jugular vein.",
negates any idea of Sulook being a journey in which the Saalik has to traverse physical distance to reach Allah Ta'ala.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER ON MODERATION IN HOPES AND WISHES

Deficiency in the hope for Divine Forgiveness when error and sin are committed is a sign of reliance on one's virtuous deeds.

In every single act the reliance of the }rifeen is only on Allah Ta'ala. They do not rely on their spiritual states, knowledge and righteous deeds.

When these Saints of Allah render virtuous deeds, their hopes do not rise. They do not feel that they have acquired elevation in their ranks on account of their pious deeds. They perpetually dwell in the hope of Allah's mercy. Their gaze is never on their righteous deeds.

On the other hand, the non-}rif reposes confidence on his good acts. When he practises virtue, his hopes rise and he feels pleased with himself, thinking that he has now become deserving of Maghfirat (Forgiveness) and Jannat. When he sins, his hopes sag. Since his reliance is on his own deeds, he labours under the impression that his sins constitute an obstacle in the path of Divine Rahmat. In consequence, such a person often abandons righteous deeds and takes to the road of sin. This is plain stupidity and ignorance.

Although A'maal-e-Saalihah are commanded and A'maal-e-Baatilah (sins) are forbidden, they do not constitute the basis of Maghfirat. The basis is solely Allah's Mercy. Thus, the sinner should not despair. He should advance along the spiritual path and turn the gaze of his heart away from his deeds, relying solely on the Mercy of Allah.

The aforementioned explanation should not be misconstrued. It should not be understood to mean abstention from regret and repentance after commission of sin. Regret and repentance are essential. The Mu'min will most assuredly repent. However, he will not despair of Allah's mercy.

If Allah Ta'ala returns you to your nafs, then your misfortune is limitless. If He reveals His grace and kindness to you, then there is no limit to your fortune.

The natural propensity of the nafs is evil and vice. Whatever virtue emanates from it, is purely the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. If Allah Ta'ala allows you to remain enslaved to your nafs, and withholds His grace and kindness from you then there will be no end to your evil because the nafs is the abode of all evils and mischief.

On the other hand, if Allah Ta'ala directs His grace and kindness to you, then your virtues will be limitless on account of His grace being limitless.

Thus, when goodness emanates from the bandah, he should contemplate on the grace of Allah and refrain from attributing the virtue to his nafs. But if he perpetrates transgression, he should know that it is from his nafs.

Whoever has the notion of his good speech being the product of his virtuous deeds, will be silenced by his sinful acts on account of shame and embarrassment. Whoever speaks, bearing in mind the kindness of Allah Ta'ala, his sins will not silence him.

If the propagator of Naseehat to people or the one who expounds spiritual realities and subtleties labours under the impression that the knowledge which he is expounding is the consequence of his uprighteousness and good deeds, then he will be silenced if he commits a sin. Since his gaze is riveted on his uprighteousness, shame will overwhelm him. He will feel his discourses to be hypocritical, hence abandon his duty of propagating the truth.

But, this is not the state of the }rif who believes that whatever knowledge and virtue he possesses are the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. Since this is his constant perception, he never attributes anything of his excellences to his nafs. Should he commit a sin, he will not abandon the duty of proclaiming Allah's Law. He will continue to proclaim the Law with the same confidence and eloquence with which he rendered his duty before the sin.

When you wish the Door of Hope to open for you, then contemplate on Your True Master's kindness and bounties. When you wish the Door of Fear to open, then contemplate on the sins and transgression you had committed.

The state of his nafs and the evils perpetrated by him are kept in view by the Saalik. As a result, his heart suffers grief and despondency. Sometimes he is overwhelmed by despair and he loses hope in the mercy of Allah, which is, in fact, kufr. At times when the despair becomes excessive, the Saalik will abandon even Namaaz, Roza, etc. It is, therefore, essential that the aspect of Divine Mercy be kept in view.

When despair sets in, the Saalik should employ his intelligence. He should bring into contemplation all the bounties and favours which Allah Ta'ala has conferred on him. He should then convince himself that if it was Allah's desire to destroy him, He would not have blessed him with so many zaahiri and baatini favours. He should meditate for a considerable time on this aspect. Allah Ta'ala will hopefully open the door of hope for the Saalik and the state of despair will be dispelled.

Sometimes the opposite condition settles over the Saalik. Perceiving his good deeds, he develops vanity and self-esteem. On such occasions the Saalik should call to memory his acts of disobedience and transgression. This contemplation will engender fear in him.

Neither should the Saalik permit despair to overwhelm him nor excessive hope which will render him audacious. He should adopt moderation.

True rajaa (hope) is that which accompanies righteous deeds otherwise it is false hope.

The rajaa which is genuine is the hope which the Saalik entertains when practising righteousness. Along with his practice of virtue he hopes for the mercy of Allah Ta'ala. The man who has hope of reaping the fruits of his farm, will expend full effort in ploughing and caring for his fields. Similarly, the Saalik who has hope of acquiring Allah's mercy, will diligently involve

himself in practising virtuous deeds. His hope will then be justified and be true.

If he acts in conflict with the Shariah and refrains from A'maal-e-Saalihah, his hope for Divine mercy and Jannat will be vain and false. It is false to describe such vain hope as rajaa. Such a person is like one who does not plough his land, but expects to reap a crop.

If you do not have a high opinion of your True Master by virtue of His Attributes of Excellence, then at least establish a good opinion of Him by virtue of the beautiful treatment He accords you. Has He not showered His Kindness on you? Has He not conferred His Bounties on you?

A true Mu'min is he who holds a high opinion of His Rabb. He understands that whatever treatment his Creator metes out is for his own benefit and welfare regardless of it being pleasing or displeasing. Since all attributes of Allah Ta'ala are only of excellence and nothing else, whatever is decreed by Him will be for the benefit of the Mu'min.

Although His attributes of excellence and perfection demand that the Mu'min holds the highest esteem for Allah Ta'ala (i.e. with regard to His attributes of perfection), nevertheless, if you lack this ability, then at least ponder on the treatment which you have received from Allah Ta'ala to this day. Do you not acknowledge His boundless favours upon you? He created you in perfect form. He bestowed a variety of innumerable bounties to you. You are, in fact, drowned in the abundance of favours. This wonderful relationship which Allah Ta'ala has with you should be sufficient to induce in you a good opinion of Him.

The high esteem on account of Allah's attributes of excellence is the rank of Allah's selected servants. Those who lack this rank should contemplate on the bounties of Allah Ta'ala for the cultivation of a beautiful comprehension of Allah Ta'ala.

He who thinks it amazing and difficult that Allah Ta'ala will release him (the Saalik) from the grip of nafsaani desires and from the prison of ghaflat, casts

the blemish of inability (Ijz) against the infinite power of Allah. But, Allah has power over all things.

Sometimes people lost in worldly affairs and forgetful of Allah Ta'ala, on seeing a pious man, yearn to be like him. They momentarily yearn to be free from worldly encumbrances so that they too could take to the path of piety. But, the nafs immediately raises its head and neutralises their eagerness for piety. The nafs leads them to believe that on account of their numerous mundane involvements, it is not possible for them to adopt piety. Their initial idea appears extremely far-fetched and impossible of realisation.

Similarly, some Thaakireen despite their Thikr and Mujahadah do not discern any improvement in their moral and spiritual condition. They then labour under the notion of the impossibility of their reformation.

There are also such Thaakireen in whose hearts Thikr has taken effect, but has not become entrenched. They, therefore, sometimes experience ghaflat and sometimes kayfiyat (the spiritual effect of Thikr). This fluctuating state remains for even years. They, therefore, begin to believe that it is impossible to eliminate their ghaflat and improve their condition.

For such people the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) says that those who feel that it is difficult for Allah Ta'ala to extricate them from the grip of their nafs, are in reality attributing weakness to Allah Ta'ala. They are implying by their attitude that the infinite Qudrat (Power) of Allah Ta'ala is defective – Na-uthubillah!

It is within Allah's power to deliver you from the grip of your nafs and bless you with His remembrance. There is, therefore, no need for despair. Many Auliya were involved in sin and transgression in their initial stage, but later Allah Ta'ala elevated them to the rank of Auliya and Mash~-ikh. He bestowed elevated ranks to them.

There is nothing but Khauf (fear) or intense Shauq (eagerness) which can prevent and expel the lustful desires of the nafs. Khauf is cultivated by meditation on the Fiery Attributes (Sifaat-e-Jalaal) of Allah or on the terror of

the Day of Qiyaamah. Shauq is acquired by contemplating on the Beautiful Attributes (Sifaat-e-Jamaal) of Allah Ta'ala or on Jannat and its pleasures.

It was explained earlier that when a nafsaani desire becomes grounded in the heart, it is most difficult to remedy it. The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) informs of its remedy. There are two treatments for such a severe disease: Khauf and Shauq.

Khauf (Fear) is either of the terrifying episodes of Qiyaamat or of the Fiery Attributes of Allah Ta'ala. The former is for the masses. The second kind of Khauf for His Sifaat-e-Jalaal such as Him being Qahhaar (Wrathful), Jabbaar (Powerful in Punishment), Muntaqim (Vengeful), etc., is for the elite (i.e. the select ones striving to attain His Proximity).

By meditating on these issues for some time, Khauf will be cultivated. Gradually it will permeate the heart and eliminate the domination of emotional desires.

Shauq (Eagerness, Yearning) is achieved by contemplating the pleasures of Jannat. This kind of Shauq is for laymen who strive to gain piety. The second kind of Shauq is achieved by meditating on Allah's attributes of Beauty such as Him being Rahmaan (Most Merciful), Ghafoor (Most Forgiving), etc. This kind of Shauq is for the elite.

It should, however, be understood that Khauf and Shauq of an inferior degree will not eradicate lust from the heart. To eliminate the entrenched disease of shahwat (lust), a strong state of either Khauf or Shauq is essential. In view of the essentiality of a high degree of these states, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) qualifies Khauf with the adjective, 'preventive' and Shauq with 'intense'.

Do not despair of the acceptance of an act in which you do not experience the pleasure of concentration. In most cases acts, the worldly fruits of which you do not experience, are accepted. (Worldly fruits: sweetness, pleasure and concentration in ibaadat).

Hudhoor-e-Kaamil (Perfect Concentration) is to perform ibaadat with such concentration of mind and heart as if you are seeing Allah Ta'ala. Not a vestige of shaitaani and nafsaani thoughts remains to distract the heart from Allah Ta'ala. The pleasure of such Hudhoor permeates the entire being of the bandah. If by the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala the bandah has gained such a high degree of concentration, it indicates that his ibaadat is accepted by Allah Ta'ala.

If the bandah fails to attain this high degree of concentration, he should not despair nor interpret it as rejection of his ibaadat. While Hudhoori is the sign of acceptance, it is not conditional for acceptance of ibaadat. Thus, the absence of a sign does not indicate rejection of the act. It frequently happens that despite acceptance by Allah Ta'ala, the effects of the ibaadat are withheld here on earth. The reward is reserved for the Hereafter.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER ON THE AADAAB (RESPECT, ETIQUETTE, RULES) OF DUAA

If, despite your humble supplication, there is a delay in the materialisation of your duaa, do not despair of the acceptance of your duaa because Allah Ta'ala has undertaken to answer your call in something which He considers beneficial for you, not in something which you desire for yourself, and He grants when He wishes, not when you desire.

Many people contend that inspite of making abundant duaa, their prayers are not answered. Some who have inculcated in themselves a degree of piety usually say that their duaas are not accepted because of their sins. They believe sin to be an impediment to the acceptance of duaa. *(Although sin is an obstacle for acceptance of duaa, it does not mean that a person's perception of his duaa's non-acceptance is due to sins. There is a difference between non-fulfilment and non-acceptance. While a duaa is accepted, its method of fulfilment and its time of fulfilment are by Allah's choice – Translator.)* Some Thaakireen too, are trapped in this waswasah (shaitaani thought). They feel that inspite of years of Mujaahadah and Thikr, their spiritual condition remains unchanged. They sincerely supplicate, but see no change in their moral or spiritual state. This attitude produces in them despair. The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) answers these misgivings by saying that if the duaa does not materialize inspite of sincere and humble supplication, it should not be interpreted as rejection by Allah Ta'ala.

Although Allah Ta'ala has promised to accept duaa, He has not promised to grant whatever is supplicated for. Our knowledge and intelligence are not adequate to always comprehend what is beneficial and harmful for us. Sometimes the object requested is not for our good. Allah Ta'ala is Most Merciful to us. He knows our needs more than what we do. He withholds the object we are supplicating for in view of it being harmful, in the same way as a wise and loving parent withholds a harmful object which the child obstinately cries for. Instead, something better and beneficial will be given. It will, therefore, not be proper to claim that the parent has rejected the request of the child.

The meaning of the Divine Promise of accepting duaa is that Allah Ta'ala will grant duaas and fulfil supplications according to His Wisdom and Choice. Sometimes the object requested is awarded and sometimes withheld. But, in lieu something better will be awarded either in this world or in the }khirat or some earthly disaster is averted in lieu. Also, sometimes the very object supplicated for is given, but at some time in the future. The reason for delaying fulfilment of the duaa is that in the Divine Wisdom the immediate awarding of the object requested is fraught with either Deeni or worldly harm.

The bandah should, therefore, refrain from employing his intelligence in issues which Allah Ta'ala decides. He should be constant in his supplication and not despair of acceptance.

If something which has been Divinely Promised fails to materialize at its promised appointed time, do not doubt the truth of the promise. Such doubt may blind your intelligence and extinguish the light of your heart.

Sometimes a Servant of Allah is informed inspirationally of the occurrence of a future event at a stipulated time. Such news may be transmitted to him by way of a dream, Ilhaam or the voice of an angel. (Ilhaam is a form of revelation which Auliya sometimes receive.) The information may be, for example, rainfall on a particular date or the ending of famine on a certain date, etc. If the appointed day arrives without the promise materializing, the bandah should not doubt the truth of the promise. It is quite probable that the materialisation of the prediction depends on some conditions which were absent on the stipulated day. Or, the Divine Intention was to test the bandah, hence the requisite conditions were not revealed to him.

Thus, the bandah should not commit the fatal error of doubting the truth of the Divine Promise, for doubting is a grave act of disrespect, ignorance and stupidity. It is also a sign of pride. Such an attitude will blind the intelligence because violation of the Divine Promise is impossible. Allah Ta'ala declares:

"Verily, Allah does not dishonour a promise."

There is the grave danger of this disrespect extinguishing the light of the heart. Thus, his baatini treasure will be snatched away. At no stage should the bandah abandon respect and his state of slavery (bandagi).

The bandah should attribute all defects and vice to himself and believe that his insight and understanding are deficient.

The statement of the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) pertains to valid Kashf and Ilhaam, not to mere thoughts and imagination.

> **Supplicating for such needs for which Allah Ta'ala has undertaken the responsibility is to accuse Him of refraining from giving. Supplicating for Proximity is the sign of being far from Him. Supplicating for foreign things whether these pertain to worldly affairs or spiritual states, is on account of your audacity. Asking from anyone besides your True Master is because of your distance from Him.**

At this juncture it is essential to understand a few important facts. One – It is of utmost importance for the Thaakir Saalik in whose heart Thikr has made some impression, that after rendering the Fardh and Waajib duties, he perpetually engrosses himself in thikr with his heart. He should eliminate all vestiges of wasaawis and keep the heart's attention engrossed with Allah Ta'ala until he gains complete mastery of his heart.

Two – In a nutshell, Tasawwuf and Ma'rifat are Adab (Respect), hence the Auliya have said:
"The whole of Tasawwuf is Adab."

Three – As long as nafsaani desires have not been eliminated and he has not annihilated his nafs, all his deeds, whether Duaa, Namaaz or Roza, will be contaminated by the nafs. Therefore, of great importance is the engrossment of the heart so that Thikr permeates the heart and nafsaani contamination is eliminated from A'maal-e-Saalihah. Ikhlaas will then be achieved.

Now understand the gist of the Shaikh's statement. He is actually saying:

O Saalik! Your supplications are of four kinds. These four kinds of duaa are in conflict with the Adab of the Divine Court. (Adab also means dignity).

Firstly, is your duaa for such things regarding which He has undertaken the responsibility of giving, e.g. Rizq. Since your nafs is still alive, its interference will certainly be in this supplication. By implication it means: "If I ask, He (Allah) will give, otherwise perhaps not." This is to accuse Allah of withholding. Also, the Saalik is doubting an issue (e.g. Rizq) on which there is yaqeen (absolute certitude). Your request, therefore, implies doubt and uncertainty, hence abstain from such a supplication. Apply yourself to your occupation, viz. Thikr. If you had been an }rif, your duaa would have been sincere and you would not have regarded your supplication to be a determinant. The aim of duaa then would not have been for the acquisition of the object requested because Allah Ta'ala has already promised to bestow it to you.

The }rif's supplication is simply to profess his weakness, humility and dependence on Allah Ta'ala. Since you are not an }rif your supplication is not free of nafsaani contamination.

Secondly, you are supplicating for His Proximity (Qurb) and Perception (Mushaahadah). This is not in conformity with your rank because Qurb and Mushaahadah for you are actually involvement with your own state. When you concern yourself with the request for Qurb and Mushaahadah, then that Qurb and Mushaahadah which you had possessed, disappeared, hence, this duaa is not appropriate. You should not divert your attention for even a second from Allah Ta'ala.

Thirdly, supplicating for anything besides your True Master, whether it be a mundane need or a spiritual rank or state, is on account of your audacity because you profess to be a searcher of your Master, but seek for something other than Him. If you had any shame, you would not have asked him for anything. Rather, you would have fully remained in His Hudhoori (concentration).

Fourthly, to ask from anyone besides your Maula (Master) is because of your remoteness from Him. If you were near to Him, never would you ask from others.

The }rifeen believe that their supplication is by virtue of Allah's aid. They do not attribute it to themselves. Hence, their duaa is for Allah with His aid.

O Saalik! Do not turn your attention to another besides your Gracious Master. Hopes cannot bypass the Gracious One.

An honourable person will place his needs in front of a gracious benefactor. He does not go for his needs to a dishonourable person. The Kareem-e-Haqeeqi (The True Gracious Benefactor) is none besides Allah Ta'ala. Kareem (Gracious) is a Being who forgives a criminal despite possessing the power of punishing him and when He promises, He honours it. When He gives, He gives more than expectation. Whoever comes within the confines of His refuge, He does not destroy him. He has no need for intercessors. These attributes par excellence exist in only Allah Ta'ala. Hence, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) instructs the Saalik to direct his attention to only Allah Ta'ala for his needs, for everyone besides Him is dishonourable. The Saalik should fix his hopes on only the True and Gracious Benefactor and not attempt to bypass Him by asking others.

When asking for a need from someone, if reliance is on that person and Allah Ta'ala is forgotten, then such asking will be negatory of the rank of bandagi (being a slave of Allah). However, if the person is considered only as the external (zaahiri) or mundane means created by Allah Ta'ala, but complete reliance is on only Allah Ta'ala, then such asking will not be in conflict with bandagi.

Do not go to someone with any such need which Allah Ta'ala has imposed on you. How can someone attend to a need which Allah Ta'ala has placed on you? How can a person who is unable to fulfil his own needs attend to your needs?

O Saalik! Turn only to Allah Ta'ala for the fulfilment of any need or for the upliftment of a calamity which He has imposed on you. Direct your plea to Him, the King Who has afflicted you with the problem. The person besides Allah, to whom you are turning, is himself overwhelmed with needs and problems. If he had power, he would firstly have relieved himself of the problems besetting him. When a man lacks the capability of tending to his own needs and problems, how will he be able to ameliorate your condition?

The solution is only to direct your case of need to your Maula-e-Haqeeqi.

Supplicating to your Master (Maula) is not a beautiful state. A beautiful state is that you are bestowed with Adab.

According to the Hadith Shareef, Duaa is the essence of Ibaadah. On account of having heard of this significance of Duaa, the Saalik who has as yet not attained freedom from his nafs, thinks that the maqsood (aim, object) is Duaa. In so doing, he errs.

As long as the reign of the nafs exists, there will be nafsaaniyat (contamination of the nafs) in even the Duaa. The nafs will supplicate for its desires and pleasures, and the attention of the heart will be on the need for which the supplication is being made, not on Allah Ta'ala. On the other hand, the Duaa of the }rifeen is undoubtedly the essence of their ibaadat because the purpose of their ibaadat is expression of their weakness and dependence on Allah Ta'ala.

The nafs of the }rif is annihilated and his gaze is perpetually on Allah Ta'ala, not on his Duaa which he makes on account of his bandagi and the Ruboobiyat (Godhood) of Allah Ta'ala.

Since the duaa of the non-}rif is for the sake of his nafs, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) says that such a duaa does not reflect a beautiful state even though it is good (and permissible). A beautiful condition of the Saalik is Adab. The Adab for him is to resign himself to Allah Ta'ala in all his affairs, and engross himself in the remembrance and Mushaahadah of his Rabb.

There is nothing better than weakness and restlessness to draw you to your Gracious Benefactor and there is nothing better than lowliness and dependence of the heart to draw the favours of Allah to you.

O Saalik! Allah Ta'ala demands from you worship and that you remain His slave (i.e. in the state of Uboodiyat). The most perfect attributes of Uboodiyat are weakness and restlessness. There is nothing superior to your weakness and the restlessness of your heart in your yearning for Allah Ta'ala at all times. Your condition should be like that of a drowning man who sees no succour other than the help of Allah Ta'ala or like a man lost in a desolate wilderness with no one to show him the road. Just as the heart of this lost person will be engulfed with anxiety, and restlessness, so too should be the state of your heart in your yearning for Allah Ta'ala.

When your heart is overcome with the feeling of helplessness and dependence, the bounties of Allah Ta'ala will be showered on you. There is no better state for the attraction of Divine Favours, both Zaahiri and Baatini, than the sad and forlorn state of your heart.

Frequently the excellent state of Adab of the Aarifeen prevents them from supplicating to Allah Ta'ala. The complete reliance is on the eternal dispensation (Qismat) which has been decreed for them. Also, their total absorption in Thikr does not permit any time for supplicating.

The }rifeen are of a variety of dispositions. Some are overwhelmed by Tafweedh and Tasleem (i.e. they are completely resigned and contented with whatever their lots are). In this state their hearts are absolutely resigned to the eternal predestined Decree of Allah Ta'ala. Whatever has been predestined will come their way. In this condition or frame of heart they consider supplication to be in conflict with Adab (Respect for Allah Ta'ala) and negatory of their disposition (Shaan) of Resignation (to the Divine Will). Furthermore, their complete engrossment in Thikrullah does not allow them any time whatever for Duaa.

However, it will be evident that the best and most perfect state is the state which resembles the state of Rasulullah (ﷺ). The Shaan (disposition) of Rasulullah (ﷺ) was to make Duaa in every affair despite his Radha (state of

being pleased with Allah Ta'ala) and Tasleem (Having resigned oneself to Allah Ta'ala) being the highest standard. Thus, the most perfect state is undoubtedly to verbally proclaim one's weakness and dependency while the heart remains in the state of Radha in all matters.

Where forgetfulness (ghaflat) is possible, reminding when requesting will be proper. It will be proper to call to attention only such a person who is uncaring of the request of the supplicator. But both these states (forgetfulness and being uncaring) are impossible of Allah Ta'ala.

This is mentioned by way of proof for the earlier statement of the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh). Some Ahl-e-Haal (Auliya in state of spiritual ecstasy) feel that abstention from Duaa is proper and Adab (Respect) because it appears as if one is reminding Allah Ta'ala of one's needs or if one does not ask, He will not give. But, both these aspects are not possible in regard to the Divine Being because of reminding is proper only where the possibility of ghaflat exists. But Allah Ta'ala is }limul Ghaib Wash-Shahaadah (The Knower of the unseen and seen). There is no need to draw His attention to anything since He is neither forgetful nor unmindful of the one in need. He has already predestined everything for the bandah, while at the same time His boundless mercy engulfs all things whether someone asks or not. Such men (of high state of spiritual ecstasy) do not present their needs, etc. to Allah Ta'ala. They adopt silence and Radha since they regard asking to be in conflict with Adab for Allah Jalle Shaanuhu.

In most cases, the Aarif having set his sight on the eternal Will of Allah Ta'ala, feels ashamed to present his needs to Allah Ta'ala. When this is his condition, how is it possible for him to present his need to people?

Since it is a known fact that all things which happen are the manifestations of the Eternal Divine Will. Everything will necessarily happen in accordance with Allah's Eternal Will. The }rif is, therefore, contented with these manifestations which were decreed in eternity. He, therefore, feels ashamed of presenting his needs in the Divine Court.

Such an }rif who feels ashamed of presenting his needs to even Allah Ta'ala, will to a greater degree refrain from asking people whom he knows are themselves paupers and helpless.

Do not think that there is a delay in the granting of forgiveness by your Maula (Master), but think that the concentration and attention of your nafs (towards Allah Ta'ala) are lax and deficient.

The nafs generally believes everyone else is like itself. Sometimes when the Saalik does not experience the effects of his abundance of riyaadhat and mujaahadah, then on account of the ignorance of the nafs he begins to think that he will not achieve any spiritual progress and the delay is from Allah's side, Nauthubillah! The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) thus says that the Saalik should not think that there is a delay in the bestowal of Allah Ta'ala. Delay in giving is the act of a miser. This is not possible in regard to Allah Ta'ala.

The ocean of Divine Grace flows perpetually. The cause of the delay is because of the deficiency of the Saalik. The Saalik lacks in perfect concentration. His attention is not fully towards Allah Ta'ala. False images are being engraved in his mind, hence the delay. It is essential that he erases these images from his heart and applies his attention fully to Allah. He will then see Divine Forgiveness every moment.

Of all the things you request from your Maula, the most beautiful and best is the thing which He demands of you, viz., Istiqaamat (firmness, steadfastness) in Uboodiyat.

Man has been created for worship and obedience. The Qur'aan Majeed states:

"I have not created jinn and man except that they worship Me."

Allah Ta'ala, therefore, demands from the bandah His Worship. Thus, the best thing which the Saalik can ask Allah, is steadfastness in worship and obedience. All other things, whether worldly or pertaining to the Deen are not the best because there is some desire and pleasure of the nafs in these

things. But, worship and slavery (to Allah Ta'ala) do not give any pleasure to the nafs.

To ask for something which gives pleasure to the nafs, is in conflict with bandagi (one's state of worship).

The purpose of Duaa and Ibaadat should not be acquisition of forgiveness and the bestowal of bounties because your intellect will then lack the ability of comprehending His wisdom and mysteries. Your Duaa and Ibaadat must be only to display your Ubodiyat and to maintain the rights of His Ruboobiyat.

O Saalik! Your objective of engrossment in Duaa and Ibaadat should not be the acquisition of some worldly or Deeni bounty. If this is your purpose, then you have failed to understand the essence and wisdom of Duaa. The purpose of your Duaa and Ibaadat should only be the demonstration of your state of slavery and worship and for the fulfilment of the Huqooq (Rights) of His Ruboobiyat. In fact, Allah Ta'ala has instructed the observance of Duaa and Ibaadat so that the bandah presents his appeal, dependency and supplication in His Court.

If this is the aim underlying Duaa, the bandah will never relent in making Duaa even if all his wishes are continuously being fulfilled because his maqsood (aim) is to display Allah's Ruboobiyat and his own slavery. On the contrary, another man whose Duaa has been fulfilled, will cease to supplicate. His abstention from Duaa (on account of the fulfilment of his wishes) is abominable. By this attitude he implies his independence.

The true bandah is he who at all times proclaims his need for the bounties of Allah Ta'ala and for His Gaze of Rahmat.

How can your past supplication be the cause for His eternal bounties.

In the previous statement it was mentioned that it behoves the Mu'min to engage in Duaa for the sake of displaying his dependency on Allah Ta'ala, not for anything else. In the statement under discussion it is said that Duaa should not be regarded as the cause for acquisition (of the needs and wants).

Whatever one will obtain has already been predestined in Eternity, while the Duaa for that object of need or desire came later. A later development cannot be a cause for an earlier existent. The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) therefore tells the Saalik to eliminate the idea of his Duaa being the cause of his needs being fulfilled.

In the next statement (mentioned hereunder), the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) draws the mind to the same issue, in a different style. The statement is also proof for the assertion which is made.

The eternal decree is extremely lofty. Cause and reason cannot be attributed to it.

O Saalik! How is it possible for you to regard your supplication as being the cause for His bestowals. The Shaan (Dignity) of the Divine Eternal decree is far above this idea. The eternal decrees are not in need of any causes and reasons. The acts of Khaaliq are far above such needs. There is, therefore, no cause or reason (sabab) for the bounties which He bestows to anyone. His bestowals were decreed in eternity while the request for it developed much later.

After having learnt this truth, it will be in conflict with the rank of bandagi (slavery) to abandon Duaa.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER ON ACKNOWLEDGING ALLAH'S COMMAND AND ABANDONING ONE'S OWN CHOICE

If inspite of the istiqaamat (steadfastness in Ibaadat and obedience) which Allah Ta'ala has bestowed to you, you desire to renounce the mundane means (Asbaab-e-Zaahiri), then know that your wish is the desire of the nafs. Your attachment (clinging) to the mundane means despite the steadfastness and fortitude which Allah Ta'ala has granted you, is to retrogress from an elevated disposition to a lowly (degenerate) disposition.

O Saalik! If Allah Ta'ala has granted you fortitude in your Deen while keeping you engaged in mundane activities, e.g. farming, trade, employment, etc., and you are blessed with istiqaamat in zaahiri and baatini Ibaadat, then your desire to abandon the worldly means for the sake of gaining freedom from the mundane encumbrances, then such an idea is the deceptive desire of the nafs, which is concealed and suppressed in the innermost recess of the nafs. Although superficially this thought appears good on account of the idea of complete renunciation of worldly attachment, bringing greater Divine Proximity, but in reality, a very sinister plot of the nafs prompts this idea.

Name and fame ensue in the wake of renunciation. The nafs desires to be known as a great saint so that people become followers. If you, O Saalik, act according to this nafsaani prompting you will lose the present state of spiritual fortitude which you have gained because the inclination of people towards a person is a fatal poison for him.

Complete renunciation is not harmful for a kaamil (one who has reached spiritual perfection). O Saalik! It is best for you to remain in whatever condition Allah Ta'ala has chosen for you. Do not choose another condition for yourself.

On the other hand, if Allah Ta'ala has granted istiqaamat in the Deen in your state of renunciation and your rizq reaches you without involvement in mundane activities, then despite this state of peace, if you desire to pursue

worldly means of acquisition, then you are falling form a lofty state to a degenerate state. After having established your bond with Allah Ta'ala – such a bond which has set free from people and which has completely eliminated your trust in them and developed in you perfect Tawakkul–your abandonment of that lofty state to cultivate a link with makhlooq (created beings), is to degenerate – to fall from the top to the bottom. Therefore, ignore the prompting of the nafs, and be pleased with the condition in which your Maula is keeping you.

Do not ask Allah Ta'ala to remove you from your present worldly or Deeni state for another state of your desire. If He had desired, He would have applied you to the activity of the other state without even changing your present condition.

It is not proper for a man involved in an activity, e.g. employment, to supplicate to be extricated from his involvement so that he could apply himself fully to the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala. If his involvement is not in conflict with the Shariah, there is no valid reason for abandoning it.

Frequently, abandoning the occupation leads to worry and frustration. If Allah Ta'ala wishes, He can grant the other stage which is desired, without the need for renouncing the existing state (in which the Saalik is involved). Since He has not done so despite His Qudrat, it clearly indicates that it is in your best interests to remain in your present state. Thus, do not abandon your existing condition voluntarily. When He wills, He will deliver you to the stage which is your objective. When He wills, He will remove you from your existing state.

Advancing himmats cannot penetrate the walls of Taqdir.

An ability (quwwat) of the nafs which influences the hearts of people and other created beings with the permission of Allah Ta'ala is termed *himmat* in the language of the Sufiyaa.

Despite the fact of these abilities (himmats) of the people of Mujaahadah stepping ahead of everything and exercising their influence swiftly on

anything towards which they direct their attention, these himmats cannot act in conflict with the predestined decrees (Taqdir).

When such an effective ability as himmat is impotent and of no significance in front of the Wall of Taqdeer, the effect of Tadbeer (employment of mundane means) has absolutely no recognition. It is, therefore, incumbent on the Mu'min to refrain from reposing trust on mundane means and agencies. He should not regard them as effective. The gaze should be on the Decree of Allah Ta'ala.

Release your nafs from the strain of Tadbeer because there is no need to assume a responsibility which Allah Ta'ala has assumed for your sake.

For the purpose of earning a livelihood, a little tadbeer (worldly involvement) which does not put pressure and strain on the nafs is sufficient. Only such a degree of tadbeer should be adopted, which does not form an impediment in your obedience to Allah Ta'ala. The reliance of the heart should not be on the tadbeer. Reliance should be only on the Razzaaqiat (Providence) of Allah Ta'ala.

However, a tadbeer which strains the nafs with an abundance of unnecessary encumbrances, overwhelming it with worry and a multitude of wasaawis, should be abandoned. Frequently it happens that despite the strain and pressure, man is not successful in his tadbeer (plan). He thus suffers greater hardship and difficulty. It, therefore, does not behove the Saalik to burden his nafs with unnecessary strain and pressure in the pursuit of a livelihood. He should give his nafs rest by releasing it from unnecessary mundane pressure.

When the responsibility of something is undertaken by a stronger, more experienced and kinder person than oneself, it is logical to feel relieved and to rely on him. The responsibility of rizq which you, O Saalik, have undertaken has already been undertaken by Allah Ta'ala. He has guaranteed your rizq. Now why should you load yourself with a burden? Do not assume the responsibility. Leave it to the plan of your Master and set your mind at rest.

Your toiling in something, the responsibility of which Allah has assumed and your deficiency in something which He demands from you, are evidence for the light of your intelligence being extinguished.

O Saalik! Your Maula has already assumed the responsibility for your sustenance (rizq) and the means of your livelihood. Declaring this responsibility, He says:

"There is not a living creature on earth, but its rizq is the responsibility of Allah."

Have you then no trust in His Providence? You labour and toil to acquire rizq which is the responsibility of Allah Ta'ala. On the other hand you are lax and deficient in worship and obedience which He demands of you and for which purpose He has created you. This attitude clearly proves that the noor (light) of your intelligence has been extinguished, hence you are devoid of intellect. If your intellect was functioning correctly, you would have been unconcerned regarding the issue of rizq whose responsibility has been assumed by Allah Ta'ala while at the same time you would have applied your full attention and effort towards the fulfilment of Allah's demand of worship.

The use of the term 'toiling' or 'striving' by the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) implies that a little effort for the acquisition of rizq will not be misplaced. However, engrossment in the pursuit of rizq is improper.

Whoever desired for a condition other than the condition in which Allah Ta'ala has created him at any given time, has left no stone unturned in the demonstration of his ignorance and imbecility.

It is imperative for the Mu'min to confront every situation which is not in conflict with the Shariah, with radha (pleasure) and tasleem (resignation), whether the situation is a calamity pertaining to life and property or whether it is a state (emotional or spiritual) of the heart. The attitude of radha and tasleem is the demand of Allah's dignity, knowledge, ma'rifat and ruboobiyat.

If a person wishes that the condition which Allah Ta'ala has imposed on him be substituted with another condition, e.g., adversity with prosperity or despondency with elation, then he displays complete ignorance and imbecility of the mind. The basis of such wishes and regrets is the jahl (ignorance) of his nafs. If he had truly possessed the ma'rifat of Allah Ta'ala, he would have understood that these predestined conditions cannever be displaced, hence regret and wish would not have occurred to him. He would have been contented with every circumstance and have observed respect. Now by virtue of his wishes he is clashing with the pre-ordained Divine Decree.

The object which you seek from your Creator is not difficult and the object which you seek to acquire by the ability of your nafs is not easy.

O Saalik! Regardless of how difficult the object of your desire may seem, be it a mundane object or a Deeni matter, as long as your sight is set on your Creator and you repose absolute trust in Him, its acquisition is not difficult. On the other hand, no matter how easy the acquisition of your desired object appears, if your gaze is on the ability of your nafs and on your plans, thus forgetting Allah Ta'ala, then its achievement will become difficult. In fact, failure is almost certain.

It is necessary, therefore, that reliance be placed on Allah Ta'ala and trust be completely shifted from one's own strength, intelligence and plans.

All things cling for support to the Divine Will, but He does not take the support of anything.

Allah's Eternal Will has already decided and predestined all occurrences in the universe, be it good or evil, guidance or deviation. The manifestation of these occurrences is because of the Divine Will. There are no other causes and reasons for the materialisation of these events. In fact, the asbaab (causes and reasons) too are related to the Divine Will.

The Divine Will is not the effect of anything existing because Mashiat (Will) is the attribute of Allah Ta'ala. If a Divine Attribute is dependent on

something, the logical conclusion will be a defect in the Divine Being (Nauthubillah!). Since Allah Ta'ala is the Perfect Being, His Mashiat is not the effect of a cause.

It is essential for the Mu'min to ensure that this knowledge of the Divine Will becomes his permanent state (Haal). He should abandon ignorance, and never cast his gaze on his means and plans.

When the morning dawns, the ghaafil person wonders what he should do on this day while the wise man wonders what treatment Allah Ta'ala will mete out for him on this day.

Know, that the Faa-il-e-Haqeeqi (the True Actor) in every act is Allah Ta'ala. The true belief of the Ahlus Sunnah Wal Jama'ah is that the Creator of all actions is Allah Ta'ala. Man is only the substance of manifestation for the Divine Acts of creation.

The person whose Tauhid is imperfect, attributes the actions to himself, hence when the new day dawns his mind dwells on different activities. But, the }rif who possesses correct knowledge, whose Tauhid is perfect and from whose nafs jahl has been eliminated, ponders on the treatment Allah Ta'ala will be meting out to him on this day. He is not concerned with what he should do because he attributes all actions to Allah Ta'ala. This attitude has become his state. His insignificance is clear to him.

Since the ghaafil's gaze is on his own capability, he attributes all his actions to his ownself. Allah Ta'ala, therefore, assigns him to his nafs. Thus, all his affairs become difficult and he becomes entrapped in numerous problems. But, for the true believer in Tauhid, the most difficult task does not overwhelm him because his gaze is fixed on Allah Ta'ala. He acquires aid openly from Allah Ta'ala.

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER ON PATIENCE AT THE TIME OF CALAMITIES AND HARDSHIPS

When Allah Ta'ala has opened up an avenue of Ma'rifat for you, then do not be concerned of the paucity of deeds because He has opened up this avenue only for you to acquire Ma'rifat. Are you not aware that it is He Who delivers to you the bounty of Ma'rifat and you are presenting your deeds to Him? What relationship is there between your presentations and His bestowals?

Among all the Maqaasid (aims, goals) of Tasawwuf, the greatest aim and bounty is the Ma'rifat of Allah Ta'ala, hence the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) says:

O Saalik! When Allah Ta'ala has opened up an avenue of His Ma'rifat for you, e.g. He reveals to your heart that He is the true Actor of all deeds or it is revealed that Allah is with you, and along with such inspirations you have acquired the correct spiritual state, then do not be concerned if you are rendering only a small amount of Nafl acts of ibaadat. Do not become despondent on account of this paucity. The aim of Nafl Ibaadat, verbal Thikr and abundance of Muraaqabah is the acquisition of Divine Ma'rifat. When you have acquired this aim, then a decrease in your deeds due to a valid reason will not adversely affect your progress in the acquisition of higher ranks of Ma'rifat. For the purpose of maintaining istiqaamat (firmness in obedience and Ibaadat) continue with acts of worship as much as you are able to render with ease.

The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) then states a subtle reason for this advice. There should be no regret on account of paucity of righteous deeds because the very fact that Allah Ta'ala has opened up for you an avenue of His Ma'rifat indicates that He wishes you to progress higher than your external deeds, hence the bestowal of the elevated stage of Divine Ma'rifat. Allah Ta'ala desires to manifest the Tajalli (Illumination) of His Beautiful Names and Attributes to you. This Ni'mat (Bounty) is immeasurably superior to an abundance of A'maal-e-Zaahirah (Physical acts of worship).

You, the Saalik, should also understand that the Ni'mat of Ma'rifat has been Divinely Conferred on you whereas the acts of Ibaadat are your presentations. There is absolutely no comparison between Allah's bestowal and your presentations. Thus, the Ni'mat of Ma'rifat is immensely superior to A'maal-e-Zaahirah. Although in reality the Taufeeq of A'maal and the practical expression of the deeds are also the effect of Allah's grace, nevertheless, the bandah is the medium for these acts whereas the Ni'mat of Ma'rifat is inspired directly into the bandah's heart. Thus, from this angle, the deeds of virtue are related to the bandah while the Ni'mat of Ma'rifat in every respect is from Allah Ta'ala. The effort of the bandah plays no role in its acquisition.

As long as you are in this worldly abode do not be surprised at the incidence of (spiritual and moral) contaminations, because the world has merely exposed its essential attribute.

As long as you are in this world, do not be surprised at difficulties, misfortunes and displeasing occurrences. O Saalik! While you are in this earthly abode do not feel surprised if clouds of contamination settle over you. An amazing and a surprising event is something which is not expected to transpire. But regarding the misfortunes and calamities of this world, nothing surprising happens. Such events are merely the natural manifestations of the attributes of the world.

Contamination and pollution are the natural and necessary characteristics of the world since Allah Ta'ala has created it as a trial and a test to distinguish between the patient and the impatient, and between the grateful and the ungrateful.

If you keep in mind that it is Allah Ta'ala Who afflicts you with difficulties and hardships, then most certainly your grief will be lightened because the One Who has involved you in the hardship has always chosen goodness for you in all your affairs.

When you keep in mind that the misfortunes which befall you are from Allah Ta'ala, the worldly causes (asbaab-e-zaahirah) having absolutely no significance in this regard, then grief and sorrow will be lessened. You will

realise that the Being Who has afflicted you with the misfortune is the same Being Who has always acted for your welfare in all your affairs. He has always treated you with love and kindness.

In view of Allah's kind and loving treatment in all your affairs, you will understand that there most certainly is some benefit for you in the hardship. While ostensibly the hardship appears to be a misfortune, in reality it is for your benefit. In fact, it is a mercy for you.

When this knowledge develops into a state (haal) in you, your worry and grief will disappear. Although the hardship will produce pain to your physical body or to your physical heart, your baatini (roohaani) heart will be contented and delighted.

Whoever entertains the notion that in difficulties and hardships Allah Ta'ala has lifted His grace and kindness, does so on account of deficiency in his intelligence.

The idea that Allah's kindness and grace are with the bandah only in the state of pleasure and prosperity, not in the state of difficulty and hardship, is the product of deficiency of the intelligence. The Mu'min bandah who holds this notion is short-sighted because his gaze is limited to the external circumstances. In difficulties and hardships the Mu'min achieves such baatini bounties which he does not acquire in prosperity. In fact, in the zaahiri ni'maat (luxuries and the state of prosperity) are numerous calamities because when the nafs acquires the objects of its pleasure, it gains strength, hence its rebellion will increase. It will thus become involved in sin. If not sin, then at least it will certainly fall into ghaflat.

On the contrary, the power of the nafs weakens in difficulties and hardships. Since Imaan exists, the bandah turns his gaze towards Allah Ta'ala. He supplicates to Allah Ta'ala and adopts sabr (patience). He turns away from the world and cultivates the attribute of Radha Bil Qadha (Contentment with the Divine Decree of Predestination). These attitudes and attributes are the acts of the heart, which are superior to the outward acts of worship executed by a healthy person in a state of peace.

Thus, it is deficiency in one's intelligence to believe that Allah Ta'ala's mercy is lifted during difficulties and hardships.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER ON THE BOUNDLESS MERCY AND KINDNESS OF ALLAH ON HIS SERVANTS

Allah Ta'ala has established the Abode of the Aakhirah as the place of reward for the deeds of His servants for two reasons. One – The world cannot contain the rewards He desires to award to His servants. Two – By awarding the reward in the everlasting abode, the value is immensely enhanced.

Allah Ta'ala has fixed the Abode of the }khirah for rewarding the deeds of His Mu'min servants. He did not establish the world for this purpose. There are two reasons for this choice of Allah Ta'ala. Firstly, this world cannot contain the rewards which He desires for His servants. According to the Hadith, the extent of the Jannat which the lowest ranking Muslim will receive, will be a distance of seven hundred years. Another Hadith states that the Jannat of the Muslim entering into Jannat last, will be equal to ten times the size of the earth. This vastness is in regard to quantity and size.

Even in terms of quality, this world cannot contain the rewards of a Mu'min. The world is the place of pollutions while the rewards of the Hereafter are pure and holy. According to the Hadith, if a bangle of the Jannat's Hoor (Damsel of Paradise) had to appear on earth, its glitter would overshadow the light of the sun and the moon.

Secondly, Allah Ta'ala has elevated the ranks of His Mu'min servants immensely. It, therefore, is not in accord with their lofty ranks to reward them in this perishable and transitory world, hence the Abode of the }khirah has been created for rewarding the Mu'mineen.

The Mu'min should not forget the }khirah by involvement in the bounties of this world. He should also not regard the worldly hardships as misfortunes because such pleasures are being prepared there for him, which did not even cross his mind.

Frequently you are given the adornments of the world and deprived of the sweetness of Ibaadat and Taa-at, and, frequently you are deprived of worldly pleasures and given the taufeeq of worship.

It often happens that on account of the worldly adornments, luxuries and pleasures which Allah Ta'ala grants you, you become involved so much in them that He deprives you of the taufeeq and sweetness of obedience. When the nafs is engaged in the pleasures of the world, it cannot experience the pleasure of Taa-at (obedience).

It also often happens that you are deprived of worldly pleasures and although you regard such deprivation as a misfortune, you are given in lieu the taufeeq and sweetness of worship. The bandah should, therefore, not focus his gaze on the superficial (worldly) bestowals and deprivations. He should understand the reality (haqeeqat) of everything and discharge the right of every occasion (i.e. of time – the Huqooq of Time being shukr, sabr, etc. as explained earlier in the chapter on Time).

When the door of your understanding has been opened up in your state of deprivation, then deprivation, in fact, is a bounty for you.

Perfect Aql (intelligence) and true comprehension, are bestowed to only the }rifeen. Others are deprived of this treasure. This treasure constitutes the fortune of this world and the }khirah. The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) comments:

O Saalik! If inspite of Allah Ta'ala having withheld a worldly or Deeni favour (ni'mat) from you, your heart is devoid of regret and you have intelligently understood that your state of deprivation is the product of Divine Wisdom and Mercy, and you remain just as pleased with Allah as you would have been if the favour was bestowed to you, then your deprivation is, in fact, Allah's bounty. It will then be incorrect to think of it as deprivation. This intelligence and your state of contentment are far superior than the ni'mat which was withheld from you.

When He bestows (Ni'mat), He displays His Generosity and Grace. When He withholds (His Bounties), He displays His Wrath and Power. Therefore, in every state He blesses you with His Ma'rifat and He turns towards you with His Grace and Kindness.

The purpose of man's creation is that he acquires the Ma'rifat of his Creator's Zaat and Lofty Sifaat, hence He says:

"I have not created jinn and man except that they worship Me."

The Hadith clarifies that the acquisition of His Ma'rifat is not possible without His Bestowal. *(Ma'rifat is the product of Allah's fadhl and rahmat, not the consequence of man's effort – Translator.)* The way of gaining Ma'rifat is to contemplate on the predestined circumstances and conditions which overtake him. In this way does the bandah gain insight of his Maula (Master). The Divine Ma'rifat then reaches the bandah according to his circumstances. He who possesses proper intelligence will, therefore, gain Ma'rifat from Allah Ta'ala in every condition. The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) expounding this concept implies:

O Saalik! When Allah Ta'ala bestows some bounty to you, He is in reality displaying His generosity and kindness to you, and when He withholds His Ni'mat from you, involving you in difficulties and hardships, then he displays to you His attribute of Anger and Power. The Saalik who derives lesson from every state is most fortunate. He derives the Ma'rifat of his Maula every moment. His heart brims with delight on account of the treasure of Ma'rifat.

Ma'rifat is the most superior Ni'mat because Allah Ta'ala focuses His Attention of greater munificence to you every moment.

The bandah shorn of intelligence, directs his attention to the Ni'mat bestowed to him, while he is unmindful (ghaafil) of Allah Ta'ala. He regards himself deserving of the Ni'mat. He thus develops pride. During conditions of adversity, he suffers, hence he complains and proves his ingratitude. Nauthubillah!

The only reason for your annoyance when bounties are withheld, is your lack of intelligence to understand the wisdom and grace of Allah Ta'ala.

O Saalik! The grief and annoyance of your heart when Allah Ta'ala afflicts you with difficulties and hardships are the products of your lack of intelligence. On account of your ignorance, you are unable to fathom the Divine Mercy, Wisdom and Grace underlying your adverse circumstances.

If you had not been ignorant, your state of adversity would have been just as pleasurable to you as your state of prosperity. In fact, your pleasure will be greater at the time of deprivation because poverty and hardship are the share (of Bounties) reserved for the special servants (Auliya) of Allah Ta'ala.

Even the bestowal of people is deprivation for you, while even Allah's withholding is a favour (ihsaan) for you.

O Saalik! Superficially the bestowal of people appears to be beneficial for you because you have received something without effort. In reality, this obtainal is deprivation because your attention will be on the people (who make gifts to you). Your distance from Allah Ta'ala is proportionate to your gaze (of desire and hope) on people. Your trust on Allah will decrease.

On the other hand, if Allah Ta'ala keeps you in poverty and hardship, then although ostensibly it appears as deprivation, in reality it is His Ihsaan (Favour) on you. In this case the true and original wealth (Ma'rifat) will increase. Your gaze will then not shift from your Maula. Your humility and dependency on Him will increase. These are designed objectives.

When your condition is such that your heart expands with delight on account of a gift bestowed, and your heart becomes constricted (with annoyance and disappointment) when a gift is withheld, then understand that you are not recognised as among the Ahlullah (Men of Allah) and that you are not genuine in your Uboodiyat.

O Saalik! If your condition is such that you worship and remember Allah with concentration and relish when He showers favours on you, but when these favours are withheld you become disappointed and despondent in Ibaadat, then know that in the Divine Court you are not regarded to be

among the Ahlullah (Saints). You have simply slinked into the Divine Court without permission just as an uninvited guest slinks into the home of the host in the company of the invited guests. Thus, by this conduct he pretends to be an invited guest.

O Saalik! Your condition is precisely like that of the uninvited guest. You are only claiming to be among the People of Allah, but your claim is false. If you were truly among the People of Allah, this would not have been your condition. Your attitude indicates that you are not true in your Uboodiyat and Bandagi (worship). Your state conveys that the quest for nafsaani pleasures yet lurks in you. You are still inclined to the acquisition of your own goal and hope. This attitude is negatory of the state of Uboodiyat and indicates slavery to the nafs.

However, if the heart's constriction is on account of fear for a trial imposed by Allah Ta'ala – the trial being a manifestation of the Wrath of Allah Ta'ala – and the uncertainty of maintaining Sabr and Istiqaamat during the trial, then it will not indicate falsity of one's Uboodiyat. Such constriction of the heart and fear are natural human reactions. The attributes of humanity (bashriyat) remain in the }rif.

Frequently Allah Ta'ala opens up the door of Taa-at for you, but does not open the door of Qubooliyat (acceptance). And, frequently He imposes a medium for reaching His Lofty Court.

Many times Allah Ta'ala opens up the door of His obedience, i.e. He bestows the taufeeq of Ibaadat and Taa-at (obedience), hence you are able to engross yourself night and day in acts of obedience, Nafl Ibaadat, contemplation, devotional exercises (ashghaal), Tilaawat, etc. But, because of the lack of the noor of Ikhlaas or because of vanity (self-esteem) or because of despising other Muslims or because you began considering yourself pious, the door of Qubooliyat is not opened. Thus, your deeds remain unaccepted.

Frequently, Allah Ta'ala imposes a sin on the worshipper. Although ostensibly the sin committed is a cause for Divine Rejection, but on account

of the exceptionally high degree of remorse, regret and repentance the sinner attains Divine Proximity. Thus, the sin becomes the medium of Maghfirat.

Therefore, the bandah should not look at the external form (zaahiri) of everything. His gaze should be focused on the inner realities (Haqeeqat) of things. If Allah Ta'ala has blessed you with the taufeeq of Ibaadat and Taa-at, do not despise those who are not involved in acts of piety nor consider yourself superior. On the other hand, if a sin has been committed, do not despair of Allah's mercy by viewing the enormity of the external form of the sin.

Two Ni'mats (Bounties) of Allah Ta'ala are so vast that nothing is beyond their confines. Both these bounties are necessary for every existing object. The first ni'mat is the act of creating and the second ni'mat is the act of sustaining – i.e. the aid of sustenance reaching continuously.

The favours of Allah Ta'ala limitlessly descend on every creature. Even limitless special favours are on every created object. However, there are two bounties which are common to everything. These two Ni'mats are the necessary requisites of every existing object. The first is the act of creation. Everything was non-existent prior to its existence. By the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala the gift of existence was bestowed. He thus created the object and eliminated non-existence from the created object.

Secondly, after coming into existence by way of creation everything is wholly dependent on the aid of Allah Ta'ala for its endurance and sustenance. For this need it is dependent on Allah Ta'ala every second of its existence. Should Allah Ta'ala withhold His aid, everything will again return to the state of non-existence. He has created different ways and means for the existence of different objects, e.g. for animals He has created water, food, etc.

Firstly, Allah Ta'ala blessed you with the Ni'mat of existence. Secondly, every moment He ensures your existence by delivering to you both zaahiri and baatini bounties in a continuous uninterrupted flow.

In the earlier statement, mention was made of the bounties of creation and assistance common to all created objects. Now, in the present statement, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) addresses Insaan (man) in particular, in fact, the address is directed to the Mu'min. The Mu'min's attention is drawn to his earlier state of pure non-existence. Allah Ta'ala then conferred on him (you, O Mu'min!) His Ni'mat of existence. Thus, for his existence, the Mu'min should understand that he is wholly dependent on Allah Ta'ala. Dependence is, therefore, man's natural and inherent attribute which he should never forget.

Secondly, every breath and moment Allah Ta'ala ensures that man receives His favours necessary for his (man's) physical and spiritual existence. Food, garments and a variety of preparations have been and are being continuously created for man's physical existence and survival. For man's spiritual existence, Allah Ta'ala constantly sends His aid in an uninterrupted flow. Without the spiritual aid of Allah (viz. the taufeeq and hidaayat He inspires into the Mu'min), the Mu'min will go astray. Thus, it has been observed that when Allah Ta'ala terminates His aid from certain people, they fall headlong into deviation (dhalaal).

Since it is not possible for you to be independent from your Rabb for even a second nor do you own anything which you can claim to be your own property, then despite this complete dependency on Allah Ta'ala, why do you portray independence? Why this self-esteem? Why this claim of excellence? How can these claims be correct? You should become a slave, keeping mind your origin and refrain from making boastful claims.

When He has disillusioned you from others and made you forlorn then understand that He desires to open the door of His love and affection on you.

O Saalik! If your heart cannot find solace with anyone except in the remembrance of Allah and you are terrified of people, then understand this state to indicate Allah's desire of love and affection for you and that He will keep you aloof from all things besides Him. On the other hand, if your heart derives comfort from people and you become bored and terrified of solitude and Thikr, then understand that this condition is a great loss and misfortune for you.

When He desires to display His favour and kindness to you, He will create in you A'maal-e-Saalihah and the praise will be attributed to you.

When Allah Ta'ala wishes to manifest His kindness and favour to a bandah, He creates deeds and lofty attributes. On the occasions of praise, He relates these good deeds and attributes to the bandah.

In reality, the bandah's action and choice have no role in his righteous deeds since Allah Ta'ala creates these deeds in him. Although Allah Ta'ala is the creator of these pious deeds, He relates the deeds to the bandah who is praised by people with titles such as Muttaqi, Muhsin, etc. Thus, if the bandah is intelligent, he will not become vain and proud when he is blessed with the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. On the contrary, he should be bashful and refrain from attributing any virtuous attribute to himself. However, evil and defects should be attributed to himself. All beautiful attributes should be related to Allah Ta'ala.

Whoever respects and honours you, has in reality neither respected nor honoured you, but he has respected and honoured the act of Divine Concealment (i.e. Allah's act of concealing your defects).

O Saalik! When someone respects and honours you with praise or gifts, do not become proud. Do not gain the impression that you have in you some excellence. In reality, the person has not praised you. He has praised Allah's attribute of Sattaariyat (Concealing the sins and defects of people). If Allah Ta'ala had not concealed your nafsaani evils, people would not even spit on you. All would have detested you because your nafs is an embodiment of mischief and evil. Therefore, do not praise and flatter the one who praises you or one who treats you with respect, honour and kindness. That Being who has concealed your faults is deserving of praise.

The one who praises and honours you is not deserving of respect and praises. On such occasions you are liable to commit two errors. The first error is that your gaze will be on the one who praises you and you will regard him as your benefactor whereas the true benefactor is Allah Ta'ala. It is He

who has concealed your evil. As a result of the respect and honour of people, do not feel that you are possessing any virtuous attributes. Any such attitude will be a grave error.

However, there is nothing wrong in expressing gratitude to the one who is kind and shows respect to you, for it is Allah Ta'ala who bestowed the goodness to you via the agency of that person (who has honoured you). But, the gaze should be on only Allah Ta'ala.

If it was not for His concealment, not a single deed would be deserving of Divine Acceptance.

Only a deed entirely devoid of any nafsaani contamination deserves to be accepted. Regardless of the degree of adornment and purification of the nafs, there will remain to some extent ego in the nafs even though this may not be discernible. The nafs by nature is an embodiment of evil. It is, therefore, simply Allah's grace and kindness that He overlooks and conceals the evil and sins of the bandah. He shows great forbearance by withholding His punishment from the sinful bandah. Above all, He accepts the bandah's defective deeds. In reality, no one's deeds deserve acceptance in His Lofty Court.

Therefore, O Saalik! Do not be overwhelmed by excessive grief on account of the deficiencies in your acts of virtue. In fact, when Allah Ta'ala accepts, He accepts our defective deeds and awards rewards for the very defective acts offered by His servants.

Prior to taking the Pledge on His Uniqueness from you in this Aalam-e-Zaahir (the physical world), He had caused you to perceive His unity in Aalam-e-Ghaib (the unseen realm of the souls). Hence, the physical body become imbued with His Uloohiyat (Godhood) and the heart and spiritual faculties (the Saraa-ir) with the Yaqeen of His Uniqueness.

O Saalik! Do not think that there is no prior origin and cause for the testimony which you bear for His Unity here on earth and for the Ibaadat you are performing. Long before Allah Ta'ala demanded that you testify to His

Unity, He had revealed and shown you His Unity in }lam-e-Arwaah (The Realm of the Souls). After your appearance on earth, your rooh (soul) fettered to the material form, activated the physical body with His Uloohiyat (Godhood) and Ma'boodiyat (i.e. Him being the object of worship) on account of the spiritual perception it had experienced in }lam-e-Arwaah. Thus, the tongue proclaims His Unity and Godhood while the other physical limbs by their obedience imply that Allah Ta'ala is the true Being to be worshipped and obeyed. Therefore, the limbs go into Sajdah and Ruku' while the heart and the other spiritual faculties (Saraa-ir) have the Yaqeen of His Uniqueness. If it was not for that prior revelation in the Realm of the Souls, then in this physical world neither would the physical body have testified to His Unity nor would the heart and the Saraa-ir have developed Yaqeen.

The similitude for the aforementioned reality is like that of a city which you had seen and forgotten. On being reminded of this city, you recall it and your heart has firm conviction (Yaqeen) of its existence and description. However, if you had never seen the city, Yaqeen will not develop regardless of the efforts of a person to explain to you. Yaqeen is not possible when the form of a thing is not in one's subconscious mind (or already embedded in the imagination).

In the absence of Roohaani Mushaahadah (the perception or seeing of the souls), Yaqeen which is like Mushaahadah, would not have been possible on the basis of only rational proofs of the Haqq. Yaqeen-e-Kaamil (Perfect Yaqeen) is not based on dalaa-il (rational proofs). Yaqeen is like a lost item which is immediately recognised on sight. Similarly, perfect conviction (Yaqeen-e-Kaamil) of Tauhid, Risaalat and all things of the }khirah existing in the heart of a Kaamil Mu'min has no relationship with rational proofs. He recognises all these realities just as one would recognise one's lost item which has been found. Thus, this yaqeen is the consequence of the Roohaani Mushaahadah. The Rooh was shown all Haqaa-iq (Realities).

When the Rooh was later imprisoned in this material body, it forgot these Haqaa-iq which were revealed to it, on account of the influences of the physical body. The Ambiya, Qur'aan and Hadith, therefore, remind man of this reality. If the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala is directed to the bandah, the material

veils of the physical body are lifted and the Rooh then resumes its original Mushaahadah. The physical body is subservient to the Rooh, hence it becomes fully involved in obedience.

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"That is the fadhl of Allah which He gives it to whomever He wishes."

Occasionally, He reveals to you some of His hidden royal secrets and He prevents you from being informed of the secret of the hearts of His servants because when a person who is not imbued with Divine Mercy learns of the secrets of people, then this awareness becomes a fitnah (trial) for him and a medium of misfortune.

O Saalik! Sometimes Allah Ta'ala reveals to you by way of Kashf and Ilhaam (forms of revelation) some of the hidden mysteries of the heaven and earth, e.g. future events or information of distant places, etc. However, He does not make you aware of the secrets in the hearts of His servants. It is not appropriate for you to desire such information (of the hearts of people) because this awareness is withheld for your own benefit.

The knowledge of the secrets in the hearts of men is awarded to only such a person who has become a perfect manifestation of Allah's attribute of mercy. Allah's attribute of Rahmat is all-embracing. Despite His knowledge of the condition of men's heart, He conceals their evil by virtue of His attribute of mercy and overlooks the errors and sins of ignoramuses. He does not hastily apprehend the perpetrators of evil. He conceals the faults of all people. A man who has imbued in himself such an attribute of mercy is sometimes made aware of the secrets of men's heart. But, one who lacks in this attribute will be cast into trial by the revelation of such secrets of the heart because his concern with his nafs will produce pride in him. Everyone is not morally reformed. Good and evil thoughts enter into the heart. Should such inner thoughts be revealed to one lacking in the attribute of perfect mercy, he will despise other Muslims while believing himself to be holy. Thus, this will be a fitnah constituting an avenue of misfortune for him.

Pride or to consider oneself to be great, is a great misfortune for man. Greatness is an attribute which belongs exclusively to Allah Ta'ala. The man

who lays claim to greatness will have his neck broken (by Allah Ta'ala). Hence, it is best and in the interests of the bandah that he is not informed of the secrets of men's hearts. However, such revelation will not be a fitnah for a man who has inculcated mercy in his nature. Even if he is informed (by way of Kashf or Ilhaam) of the secrets of the hearts, he will view the people with affection and mercy.

When He saw the attention of His servants directed to His special grace and to the manifestation of the mysteries of His special Attention, then He proclaimed: "Allah chooses His Rahmat for whomever He desires". Thus, He severed the vein of desire. When He saw that if He left them (His servants) to believe that the secret of His grace is, in fact, His choice (of bestowing mercy on whomever He wishes), then trusting on the eternal decree of Taqdir, they would have abandoned the practice of righteous deeds, He said: "The mercy of Allah is near to those who practise righteousness".

The Rahmat (Mercy) of Allah Ta'ala is of two kinds: Rahmat-e-}mmah and Rahmat-e-Khaas-sah.

Rahmat-e-}mmah or Universal Mercy is for the entire creation. By virtue of this general mercy He bestowed existence to everyone and everything, as well as sustaining them until an appointed time. This mercy is not restricted to any particular being, but extends to all things. Thus, Allah Ta'ala says: "My mercy embraces all things." This is the Rahmat of creation and sustenance.

Rahmat-e-Khaas-sah or the Special Mercy is His Proximity, Grace and Attention. This mercy is not general. Its basis is Divine Will. He bestows this special mercy to whomever He wills without any intermediate cause. By directing His special mercy to a person, He bestows His Proximity (Qurb) to him. The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) refers to this special mercy.

In His eternal knowledge, Allah Ta'ala was aware that people are desirous of the special mercy of Allah Ta'ala. They desire that the mysteries and secrets of the special mercy of Allah Ta'ala be revealed to them so that they attain His Qurb (closeness). Motivated by this quest they practise righteous deeds and supplicate for the realisation of this aim. They feel that on account

of their virtuous deeds they have become deserving of Allah's special mercy.

Dismissing this baseless idea, Allah Ta'ala says (in the Qur'aan):

"He chooses His (special) Rahmat for whomever He wills."

In other words, the quest and righteous deeds of people are not the basis for the acquisition of His Rahmat-e-Khaas-sah. The basis for it is Allah's Will.

Although righteous deeds, supplication and effort are not the cause for the acquisition of Allah's special mercy, they are undoubtedly signs of this special eternal bounty. When by that fadhl of Allah Ta'ala the bandah practises righteousness, it indicates that He has directed His Attention to that bandah. The bandah should understand that these A'maal-e-Saalihah will ultimately deliver him to Allah's special mercy.

If, however, the bandah was not exhorted to practise virtue, but was left with only the belief that Allah Ta'ala grants His special mercy to whomever He wills, then the bandah would have simply placed his reliance on Taqdir, thus refraining from righteous deeds. Hence, Allah Ta'ala says (in the Qur'aan):

"Verily, the Rahmat of Allah is near to those who do good."

It is, therefore, improper to abandon righteousness. Along with righteousness, hope should be on the Will of Allah Ta'ala, not on one's deeds.

Should one repose hope on one's deeds, it will be tantamount to reliance on one's nafs.

During Azal (Eternity – when man was non-existent) His special mercy was directed to you without there having emanated from you any act which demands such special mercy. Where were you when His special mercy was directed to you? In Azal your attributes and actions did not exist. Nothing besides His Pure Fadhl and magnanimous Forgiveness existed.

This statement is stated as proof for the earlier averment. O Saalik! Your understanding that your righteous deeds, spiritual states and effort bring about the special mercy and proximity of Allah, is due to deficiency in your thinking. What deed did you render in Azal which brought the focus of Allah's bounty to you? The decree of Inaayat (His Special Mercy) was applied to you in Azal when you and your deeds were non-existent. It was nothing but His Fadhl, hence you should not consider your deeds as the cause for His Fadhl. Remove your gaze from your efforts and focus it on the mercy of Allah Ta'ala.

Neither do your acts of obedience benefit Him nor do your sins harm Him. You have been instructed to practise righteousness and to abstain from evil only because its benefit accrue to you.

O Bandah! Your obedience does not benefit Allah Ta'ala in any way whatever because He is absolutely independent of all things. Your disobedience cannot harm Him in any way because He is Mighty, Powerful and Wrathful.

You have been commanded to practise righteousness and to abstain from transgression so that you acquire the benefit in this world and the Hereafter. He says in the Qur'aan:

"Whoever practises righteousness, it is for himself and whoever sins, it is on himself."

The demand therefore is, that you do good, refrain from evil and never ever think that you have accomplished something wonderful. The idea of accomplishment would be proper if the actions rendered by you benefit another person. If you refrain from righteousness you are simply depriving yourself of benefits. You are not bestowing any favour on anyone.

Neither does the attention of any person increase Allah's infinite glory, splendour and greatness nor does the unmindfulness of anyone decrease His infinite glory, splendour and greatness.

It is a characteristic of the nafs to liken others to itself. To a degree this will be appropriate in regard to human beings since all are of the same species. However, man, on account of his ignorance and stupidity sometimes thinks of Allah Ta'ala as he thinks of himself in some affairs. Some ignoramuses believe that by their attention towards Allah, they have elevated and adorned the Deen or some persons who had previously aided the Deen by acts of virtue, labour under the impression that if they abstain from Deeni service or they die, the Deen of Allah will suffer a setback. These notions are refuted by the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh).

The only reason for Allah Ta'ala allowing people to hurt you, is that your heart does not find solace with them. By means of the hurt caused to you, He sets you free from people so that nothing makes you neglectful of your True Master.

O Saalik! If you suffer any hurt or harm at the hands of people, whether to your body, wealth or reputation, do not become despondent and disillusioned. There is much wisdom underlying their attitude. In reality this discomfort has come to you from Allah Ta'ala. If instead of the hurt you are favoured and comforted by people, you will then find solace with them and repose your trust on them instead of on Allah Ta'ala.

Allah Ta'ala desires that your heart be completely disillusioned with people, hence He causes creation to hurt you. In consequence you will free yourself from all others. When an intelligent person experiences ingratitude and fickleness in one or two of his associates, he realises that others too are similar. He will, therefore, free his heart from all association. This in reality is a great mercy of Allah Ta'ala for him in that nothing will make this bandah neglectful of his true Master. He (the bandah) observes that everything is transitory, hence he will not derive pleasure in anything besides Allah Ta'ala.

Allah has made shaitaan your enemy so that you are constrained to turn to Him (Allah Ta'ala) and He induced you to pursue the desires of your nafs so that you direct your attention to Him permanently.

Allah Ta'ala after appointing shaitaan your enemy, informed you thereof. Thus, the Qur'aan says:

"Verily, Shaitaan is for you an open enemy."

By virtue of Allah's information and your own experience, you will realise without any doubt that Shaitaan is your enemy in addition to your nafs. While your nafs is your enemy from within, Shaitaan is an outside enemy. You will realise that he is the enemy of both your worldly and Deeni welfare. At the same time you will know that on account of your weakness and the invisibility of your enemy, his plots to destroy you will be highly dangerous. Furthermore, you will not find any friend on earth to aid you against your enemy. When this knowledge becomes the condition of your heart, you will readily turn in supplication to Allah Ta'ala. You will be anxiously turning your attention to Him. This attitude is most desirable. This laudable attitude will, in fact, be the consequence of shaitaan's animosity for you.

Similarly, Allah Ta'ala has induced your nafs to pursue desires. The nafs is everlastingly demanding satiation of its pleasures. Sometimes the nafs seeks expression of its desire for the commission of sin and sometimes it desires the beauties and luxuries of the world, but the Saalik becomes perturbed by these demands because the domination of these desires prevents him from his actual goal (viz. Divine Proximity).

Thus, the wisdom and mercy of Allah Ta'ala for the bandah in this is that he will struggle against his nafs. Since the bandah cannot overcome the nafs by himself, he has no option but to supplicate to Allah Ta'ala for aid. His attention will, therefore, be fixed permanently on Allah Ta'ala. Thus, he will ever be alert against this enemy. However, it should be understood that the state of being permanently alert against the enemy will be acquired only when the knowledge of the nafs's malice becomes one's attitude and disposition. Mere knowledge is not sufficient.

When you know that shaitaan is not neglectful of you, then you too should not be forgetful of your true Maula in whose possession is your life.

O Mu'min and O Saalik! You are aware that Allah Ta'ala has informed you that shaitaan is perpetually scheming to deviate and destroy you. Allah Ta'ala mentions shaitaan's vow. The Qur'aan says:

"I shall most certainly come to them from infront of them, from behind, on their right sides and on their left sides."

He vowed to attack the servants of Allah from every side to mislead them. Your plan to thwart shaitaan should be your alertness. You should not be neglectful of your Master in Whose power is your life. Supplicate to Him. Only He can save you from your enemy.

Allah Ta'ala created you between the physical world (Aalam-e-Shahaadat) and the spiritual world (Aalam-e-Ghaib) so that your lofty rank be made conspicuous in His creation and so that your uniqueness and superiority over entire creation be demonstrated.

O Insaan! Allah Ta'ala has created you of two entities – physical and spiritual. You are neither totally a physical being nor a totally spiritual being as the Angels. You are a creation in a state between these two entities. Your intermediate status (between the physical and spiritual) is evident.

Allah Ta'ala created man between the heaven and earth. All things on earth have been created for man's use and benefit, and all things have been made subservient to him.

If man was a completely physical creation of this world, he would have been like all other physical and worldly creatures. He would then not have enjoyed superiority over them. Thus, it is clear that the essential substance of his constitution is something other than his physical matter. By virtue of his special spiritual essence, man enjoys superiority over all other creation. That special substance is his relationship with the spiritual realm (}lam-e-Ghaib).

Allah Ta'ala has created man a microcosm. He is an embodiment of all existing creation consisting of lofty and lowly attributes, and of physical and spiritual substances. He is thus physical and spiritual at the same time. He is earthly as well as heavenly. He possesses the angelic qualities of intelligence, ma'rifat and ibaadat. He has the capability of misleading others and being misled himself. He has the attributes of rebellion and transgression. These are the animal and satanic attributes within him. In his state of anger he is a lion

and when lust dominates him, he is a pig. In the state of greed and adversity he is a dog. When he deceives, he is a fox. His growth and development are like that of the trees. Like the heavens, he is a substance (mahl) for mysteries and celestial light (noor). Like the ground, he is both hard and soft.

His heart is the abode of Divine Radiance (Tajalli of Allah), hence he resembles the Arsh of Allah Ta'ala. He contains within him the treasures of knowledge. He is, therefore, like Looh-e-Ma'hfooz (The Angelic Library in the heaven). When his moral character is reformed, he is Jannat and when his evil attributes predominate, he is Jahannum.

In short, man incorporates within him samples of every creation. It is for this reason that he is described as }lam-e-Asghar (microcosm or little world) and Mazhar-e-Atam (perfect substratum of the manifestation of entire creation).

The aim underlying man's all-embracing constitution is for him to realise his significance and superiority over all creation. He will realise from his very constitution that man is a priceless pearl which embraces all aspects of entire creation. When he has recognised this reality, he will not destroy himself by involvement in disobedience to his Master and Creator. He will maintain himself on the lofty and magnificent plane on which Allah Ta'ala has created him. The sole method for this is perpetual obedience to his Creator and abstention from transgression.

THE SEVENTEENTH CHAPTER ON SUHBAT (COMPANIONSHIP)

Do not acquire the companionship of a person whose state does not exhort you towards Allah Ta'ala nor does his speech guide you to Allah Ta'ala.

There is nothing more beneficial for the Saalik than pious Suhbat. Whoever had gained any treasure (moral and spiritual), acquired it by virtue of Suhbat, hence the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) states the principle in this regard so that the Saalik understands the companionship which will be beneficial and harmful for him.

Never choose the company of a man who does not encourage and induce you towards Allah Ta'ala. The haal (state) of the companion (i.e. the Shaikh – spiritual guide) should be such that his entire attention is focused on Allah Ta'ala. The gaze of his heart should be diverted from creation. In every affair his complete reliance should be on Allah Ta'ala. In his lofty estimate creation should have no significance and no rank. Obedience to the Shariah in all affairs should have become his natural disposition. His speech should guide towards the Path of Allah, i.e. his speech should produce the effect of magnetically drawing the Searcher towards Allah Ta'ala. Such a person is qualified for companionship.

A man who lacks the aforementioned qualities is of no benefit. In fact, his suhbat is harmful even if overtly he has the appearance of a saint. Since his heart's relationship is with alien objects (i.e. things besides Allah Ta'ala), his companionship is bound to exercise its influence. Those in his association will be similarly affected with his detrimental influences.

Sometimes you perpetrate evil. But, should you acquire the suhbat of someone worse than you, you will be led to believe that you are pious.

It is incumbent on the Mu'min to acquire the companionship of a person better than himself. In the Suhbat of a better man, you will see your own faults and you will become concerned with your moral and spiritual

reformation. On the other hand, if you sit in the company of a man worse than yourself, its necessary consequence will be that despite your evil you will regard yourself to be pious. You will most certainly gain the impression that you are better than him. Thus, your own deficiencies will not become discernible. You will be overtaken by vanity (ujub) and be pleased with yourself.

In reality your true companion is the person who remains with you even after being apprized of your faults. Besides your Maula-e-Kareem (Gracious Master) no one else is such a companion.

The friendship of worldly people is generally fickle. When they discover one's faults, they sever relationship. They develop a dislike for the former friend. But, the Creator maintains His relationship with His servants inspite of being aware of their innumerable deficiencies. Only He is the true Companion, for He is firm in His Friendship even while having the knowledge of the faults of His servants. The Ahlullah (Auliya) who have cultivated in themselves Divine Attributes also maintain their relationship with a person even after discovering their defects. They will conceal even the greatest sin which they see in their associates. They do not sever their relationship.

Thus, a man should establish his relationship with His Master or with those who are linked to His Master (i.e. the Auliya).

Your best friend is he who desires goodness for you without the motive of self-interest.

Your best friend is a person who strives for your welfare without having any motive of self-gain for himself. This is the disposition of Allah Ta'ala and of the Ahlullah who desire good for even enemies. They do not cherish any hope for personal gain because their hearts have been completely purified of nafsaani motives. Therefore, their relationship with people is purely for the sake of Allah Ta'ala. It is essential, therefore, to establish a bond with the Ahlullah and to abandon all other friendships which are based on lowly motives.

THE EIGHTEENTH CHAPTER ON TAMA' (DESIRE)

The branches of disgrace spread out from nothing but the seed of tama' (desire).

The branches of the tree of disgrace grow and spread from the seed of greed and desire which has taken root in the heart. Disgrace is always the consequence of greed and desire. When man's heart desires wealth and fame, then for its acquisition he will certainly establish a relationship with people and direct his appeals to them. The acquisition of wealth or fame is not possible without collusion with others. His desire constrains him to flatter and beg others. This is a great disgrace. Tama' is thus the root of all evil.

True respect lies in man's heart being devoid of any relationship with anyone besides Allah. He remains independent from all. This treasure of true respect is acquired by the elimination of greed and the cultivation of the attribute of qanaa-at (contentment).

No evil has imprisoned you so much as suspicion.

This assertion is the proof for the earlier statement. Nothing is as effective as suspicion for imprisoning man in greed and desire. As a result of suspicion, man becomes ensnared in the net of desire. You imagine or suspect that a certain man will be a benefit to you. You, therefore, turn your gaze of desire to him expecting benefit from him. Or you imagine a particular trade, profession or occupation will be beneficial for you. Greed then induces you to become involved in that pursuit.

All the chains of relationship which are fettering man's legs are the products of man's imagination or suspicion. It is only Divine Power or the attention of the Ahlullah which can free man from these chains.

The nafs inclines greatly to imagination and remains very far from Haqaa-iq (Realities). As long as the nafs has not been purified, the elimination of this disease is difficult.

You are free from something in which you have lost hope and you are the slave of the object of your desire.

When desire and greed for an object arise in the heart, a strong relationship develops with it. The heart becomes enslaved to it. This enslavement brings in its wake a variety of difficulties. In the bid for its acquisition, man bears the indignity of many a disgrace.

If the heart despairs of all things, it attains freedom from them and achieves perpetual peace and comfort. It, therefore, does not behove a Muslim to disgrace himself in the pursuit of the lowly things of the world and to forget the }khirah.

THE NINETEENTH CHAPTER ON TAWAADHU' (HUMILITY)

Whoever asserts tawaadhu' (humility) for himself, is undoubtedly a man of pride because when a claim of humility is made, it is made after the perception of one's (supposed) lofty rank. This implies that one believes in one's personal elevation, hence one is a mutakabbir (proud person).

Believing oneself to be the most contemptible and lowest being is known as tawaadhu' (humility). The consideration of greatness in oneself is takaabur (pride).

The knowledge of a thing is gained from its opposite. In the absence of the opposite, the knowledge of a thing would not be possible. The knowledge of light is by virtue of darkness. If on earth there was only light and no darkness whatever, the conception of light would not have been possible. The knowledge of courage is on account of cowardice. If there was no cowardice, there would not have been the knowledge of courage. Thus, the claim of humility made by a person is tantamount to takabbur (pride). There is no doubt in him being proudful. If his nafs was fully imbued with true humility, he would not have been aware thereof because of the non-existence of its opposite, viz. kibr (pride).

Since pride exists in the man who lays claim to humility, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) says that the one who puts forth the claim that he is humble, is in actual fact considering himself to be elevated. Thus, he is a man of pride.

The meaning of Tawaadhu' is that man views himself with all honesty to be so contemptible that the possibility of him having any rank does not even occur to his mind. He sees nothing but contemptibly in himself. When this degree of humility has been cultivated, no claims will be made, neither in regard to Tawaadhu' nor in regard to any other praiseworthy attribute.

A humble man is not a person who regards himself above the act of humility he is displaying. A humble man is a person who considers himself below the act of humility he is doing.

Generally people believe that a humble person is one who displays acts of humility, e.g. a wealthy man rendering some service with his own hands to a poor person. People gain the impression from this display that the wealthy man is very humble when in fact, he may be entirely devoid of any humility because he thinks of himself as being as being superior to this act. While he overtly displays humility, he covertly believes that the act of humility in which he is involved is below his dignity. He feels conscious of having adopted humility and he believes that he has practised virtue.

True Tawaadhu' (humility) is the consequence of the perception (mushaahadah) of the grandeur of Allah and of the tajalli (celestial illumination) of His Attributes.

While people generally think that ostensible actions or displays of humility are Tawaadhu', in reality true humility is that condition of lowliness which is accepted by Allah Ta'ala. When the greatness of Allah dawns on the heart of man and he vividly realises the illumination of His Attributes, then the rebellious nafs melts away. The roots of rebellion and pride are then eradicated. The vain hopes of the nafs are annihilated. Humility then develops. This then is true humility.

A sin which humbles a man and cultivates in him dependency on Allah, is better than such worship which generates pride and arrogance in him.

The purpose of Ibaadat and Thikr is to become humble and to feel wholly dependent on Allah Ta'ala, eliminating the rebellion and arrogance of the nafs. If on account of a sin committed because of the frailty of human nature, man is torn by remorse, and the humility he feels as a result, causes him to despise himself and to believe that the sin will destroy him, then these effects of the sin are better than the conceit which a man develops as a consequence of his acts of worship and piety. His conceit, self-esteem and pride constrain him to despise other Muslims.

A dim-witted person should not now understand from this explanation that it is better to abandon worship and commit sins. The evil of sin and the virtue and beauty of obedience are self-evident facts. At this juncture the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) is simply pointing out that the actual method of reaching the Divine Court is by way of acquiring true humility and dependence on Allah.

THE TWENTIETH CHAPTER ON ISTIDRAAJ (RESPITE)

Be fearful of the daily state of favour (Ihsaan) of Allah Ta'ala despite your disobedience, for this may be a respite for you.

Sometimes Allah Ta'ala does not apprehend the transgressors. Inspite of their rebellion and transgression He gives them time and continues to shower His favours on them. When they completely lose themselves in sin and reach the point of no return, He suddenly apprehends them. The granting of such respite to the transgressors is called Istidraaj which is a matter of utmost gravity.

On the other hand, some servants of Allah are immediately forewarned when they commit any misdeed. As a result, they quickly engage in Thikrullah and abandon the transgression. They banish ghaflat.

Here the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) discusses Istidraaj. He says that Allah's ihsaan (kindness, favour) settles over you every moment while you persist audaciously in transgression. You are not even being reprimanded. Instead, your wishes are granted. This condition is fearful. You should fear this state, for perhaps it is respite allowed by Allah Ta'ala. Thereafter, He will suddenly apprehend you with His punishment. Proof for this is in the Qur'aan which warns of Allah's punishment arriving suddenly in the wake of the respite granted to the transgressors. When their transgression exceeds the bounds, His punishment comes swiftly. The period of grace granted (the Istidraaj) should, therefore not be misunderstood. When Allah Ta'ala gives man respite, his ghaflat (negligence) increases in stages, but his hopes and desires are fulfilled. When his ghaflat has thoroughly set in, the Divine Chastisement suddenly overtakes him.

The great foolishness of the mureed is to behave disrespectfully. When there is a delay in the arrival of the punishment, he thinks that if he was in error, then the zaahiri and baatini bounties of Allah would have ceased. Sometimes Divine Aid ceases without one being aware thereof because Allah may block

off only the additional (or excess) favours or He may distance the mureed in rank (i.e. depriving him of proximity) without him being aware or sometimes He simply leaves one to dwell in one's hopes.

The applicability of Ahkaam (Laws) and apprehension (i.e. punishment) are in proportion to one's proximity (Qurb) to Allah Ta'ala. The closer one is to Allah, the severer is the applicability of the laws. In many aspects the general public is excused and not apprehended for misdeeds. However, the elite (Khawaas – the Auliya) are immediately apprehended (rebuked or punished) for any slips they make. On being Divinely Apprehended, they readily understand the error for which they are being caught.

Sometimes the Thaakir, Saalik, Shaakir utters a disrespectful word regarding Haqq Ta'ala, e.g. a word of complaint slips from his mouth because of some occurrence or he complains to someone about the hardship on him or he criticises someone among the Mash~-ikh or he regards a disrespectful act of his as being insignificant because he was not immediately overtaken by punishment. He, therefore, thinks that if his act was truly disrespectful, the physical and spiritual favours (ni'mat) in which he is basking would have ceased. The zaahiri (physical) favours are wealth, children, health, strength and other material comforts. The baatini (spiritual) favours are the rays of spiritual illumination which continuously cascade into the heart of the Saalik from }lam-e-Ghaib (The Unseen or Celestial Realm). The idea that this Divine Aid and favour would have terminated is the result of extreme ignorance. It is not necessary for the Saalik to be aware of the termination of baatini fuyoodh because such cessation can happen in several indiscernible ways. Sometimes this happens by way of the cessation of only further progress and his spiritual station becomes stagnant. This stagnation leads to a gradual development of a barrier between the Saalik and Allah Ta'ala and while he labours under the impression of being on his former pedestal (i.e. of Divine Proximity), a great change has in fact taken place – Nauthubillah minhu (We seek Allah's protection from it).

Sometimes the Saalik drifts far from Allah's Qurb (Proximity). However, inspite of him being trapped in this position, he does not realise it. Sometimes the Saalik is left to his whims and fancies. Whereas formerly Allah Ta'ala held the Saalik's choice and freewill subservient to His Will,

now his subservience is eliminated and the Saalik is placed under the domination of his nafs. Allah Ta'ala then withholds His aid.

The mureed should, therefore, live with the utmost respect and control his speech and movement. It should here be understood that this type of disrespect (as mentioned above) is committed by a mureed whose nafs has not attained complete fanaa (annihilation). After attainment of fanaa, the possibility of disrespect is entirely precluded. The question of any barrier (hijaab), therefore, developing between the mureed and Allah does not arise. *(However, even after attainment of Fanaa [self-annihilation], the state of an ignorant Sufi who has no shaikh remains precarious. Without a Shaikh-e-Kaamil and lacking in Ihm-e-Deen, he can end up worshipping shaitaan – May Allah Ta'ala protect us – translator.)*

THE TWENTY FIRST CHAPTER ON WIRD, WAZIFAH AND THE ANWAAR WHICH FLOW INTO THE HEART

It is only a jaahil (ignoramus) who regards constancy of a'maal and athkaar as insignificant. Waaridaat-e-Ilaahiyyah (inspirations from Allah Ta'ala) will occur even in the abode of the Aakhirah while auraad (plural of wird) and wazaa-if (plural of wazifah) will end with this world. It is, therefore, of greater importance to maintain something which has no substitute. Your Maula Ta'ala demands wird from you while you expect waarid from Him. What relationship is there between your desire and His demand? (i.e. There is no comparison, your desire being of no significance in relation to His command.)

The Ibaadat-e-Zaahiri (outward acts of worship) such as Nawaafil (Nafl acts), Athkaar, etc. or Ibaadat-e-Baatini (inward or spiritual acts) such as Muraaqabah (meditation) and shaghl of the heart, which one practises voluntarily are called Wird. The anwaar (rays of spiritual illumination) which enters the heart of the bandah involuntarily (without his will and effort) are termed Waarid.

Sometimes the Saalik commits the error of thinking that the ibaadat and thikr which he practises with his own will are not as significant as the waaridat which he receives. The reason for this impression is that everyone practises such acts of worship by their own will and intention. On the other hand waarid is received without one's will or intention. Furthermore, everyone is not the recipient of waarid. The nafs, therefore, attaches greater importance to waarid. But, this is erroneous.

The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) dispels this error, hence he says that it is only the jaahil who regards constancy in a'maal and athkaar as being insignificant. There are two reasons for this misconception. One – The incidence of waaridaat will be even in the }khirat. In fact, the waaridaat will be more in }khirat because here on earth contaminations, human nature and the physical body constitute impediments for Divine Inspirations. But, in the }khirat these impediments will not exist. On the other hand, the auraad and

wazaa-if which are rendered with the physical body are possible only here on earth. Thus, after death there is no substitute for ibaadat and auraad whereas waaridaat exist here and will exist in the }khirat as well in even greater measure. Hence, it is of greater importance to guard the ibaadat-e-zaahiri which is called wird. Two – The one who demands wird is Allah Ta'ala while you (the Saalik) is the one who desires waaridaat. There is no comparison between your desire and Allah's demand. It behoves you to attach much greater importance to His demand. It is, therefore, essential for the Saalik to be constant in the observance of the shaghl and wird which have been imposed on him. He should not regard these to be inferior to waarid because the normal cause of waaridaat is also wird. As a result of the Saalik's wird, he is blessed with the incidence of waaridaat.

When you observe any bandah exercising constancy in auraad, but you are unable to discern on him the appearance of Aarifeen nor the glitter of ma'rifat, then do not think lowly of this Divine Gift (of his constancy). If it was not for the Divine Rays of illumination (Tajalliyaat), he would not have had the ability to be constant.

The elite (Khaas) servants of Allah Ta'ala are of two kinds: Muqarrabeen and Abraar. The Muqarrabeen are those whose choice and nafsaani desires have been eliminated. Their Sustainment (Baqa) is with the iraadah (will) and ikhtiyaar (choice) of Allah. They worship Allah and discharge His rights by virtue of their enslavement to Him. Their motive is nothing else. They are not concerned with Jannat and Jahannum.

The Abraar are those in whom nafsaani desires and personal intention (iraadah) still exist. They worship Allah for the attainment of Jannat and for salvation from Jahannum. Their gaze is set on the acquisition of lofty stations in Jannat.

The Qur'aan Majeed mentions both types of pious servants, either implicitly or explicitly. In his statement here, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) mentions the Abraar. He says that sometimes one sees a man steadfast on his ibaadat and auraad, and at the same time observes Divine Aid with him (i.e. In fulfilling his ibaadat and devotional acts, there are no obstacles in his path, Allah Ta'ala having freed him of all worldly activities and harnessed him into

ibaadat). But, despite this it is observed that the attributes normally to be found in the }rifeen are lacking in him, e.g. he indulges in nafsaani pleasures such as donning high quality garments and eating delicious foods and he also lacks in perpetual Thikr and Hudhoori (state of Divine Perception), nor does there emanate from his face the radiance of the people of Ma'rifat and Muhabbat (Divine Love), then do not regard the treasure of his constancy in his ibaadat as insignificant. Do not entertain the notion of his wird and wazifah being of no value simply on account of the qualities of the }rifeen not being discernible in him. Any such attitude is an act of extreme disrespect. It is not possible to display such steadfastness and determination without Divine Illumination (Tajalliyaat-e-Ilaahiyyah). It is this Tajalli on his heart which sustains and keeps him constant and steadfast in his ibaadat although it is conceded that he lacks the degree of Divine Illumination experienced by the }rifeen whose desires, motives and choice have all been annihilated. But to despise him or to regard his state to be inferior is the result of ignorance, and this attitude is an act of disrespect.

Divine Aid is in proportion to ability and the radiance of anwaar is in proportion to the purity of the Asraar-e-Baatini (the spiritual Faculties).

The incidence of anwaar and barakaat on the heart of the bandah is according to his Spiritual ability. His spiritual ability will be in the state of perfection if:

He is fully steadfast in his auraad, keeping his heart free from aliens (things besides Allah), thoughts and contamination.

He is also constant and firm in maintaining physical tahaarat (purity).

In proportion to the degree of his spiritual ability, will the waaridaat and anwaar descend on him.

The maqsood (aim – purpose) of waaridaat and barkaat is Yaqeen and ma'rifat of Allah Ta'ala. The radiance of the anwaar of Yaqeen and ma'rifat is according to the degree of purity of the Lataa-if (spiritual faculties), and the purity of the baatin (the spiritual faculties) is dependent on constancy in the

zaahiri auraad (acts of ibaadat). It is, therefore, necessary for the bandah to strive diligently to be constant in the observance of his acts of ibaadat.

The difference in the types of a'maal is the consequence of the difference in the states of waaridaat.

A'maal-e-Zaahirah are subservient to the waaridaat of the heart. The external actions of the bandah will be according to the inspirations (waaridaat) entering the heart. It is observed that some Saalikeen have a greater affinity with Nawaafil (optional acts of Salaat), some with Saum (fasting), some with Sadqah, some with Duaa (supplication), some with Hajj while others again have a greater preference for Khalwat (Solitude). These differences are due to differences in the waaridaat which descend on the Saalikeen from Allah Ta'ala.

In view of this reality, it is improper to criticise any one. Everyone is, in fact, constrained to act according to his waaridat. However, there is no doubt in the superiority and excellence of the Saalik in whose spiritual and physical states there is a balance because the balanced way is the method of Rasulullah (ﷺ). Although the most perfect balanced way is exclusive to Rasulullah (ﷺ), whoever acquired some share of it, became the outstanding luminary of the age. But such persons are rare. Among millions, there will be one who has been blessed with the niyaabat (vicegerency) of the Rasool (ﷺ). There are no extremes in the states of such a man. His states and actions are balanced.

The excellences of a'maal are the result of the beauties of ahwaal (spiritual states). The beauties of ahwaal are the product of firmness in the stations of ma'rifat.

A'maal here refers to the external or physical deeds of virtue. Ahwaal refers to the states and attributes of the heart such as zuhd (abstinence), qana'at (contentment), tawaadhu' (humility), ikhlaas (sincerity), etc. Maqaamaat-e-Ma'rifat (or the stations of Ma'rifat) are the reflections of Divine Attributes which become impressed in the hearts of the }rifeen.

If the ahwaal are beautiful, i.e. the heart is adorned with Akhlaaq-e-Hameedah (the lofty praiseworthy attributes) and purified of the Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah, the practical deeds will be beautiful. This means that the calamities which are obstacles in the path of acceptance, are non-existent, e.g. the Saalik is devoid of ujub (vanity). Such beautiful deeds will be adorned with hudhoor (the state of Divine Perception) and khushu' and unplagued by wasaawis (satanic and stray thoughts which enter the mind involuntarily).

If the Saalik is steadfast in the Maqaamaat-e-Ma'rifat, he will then be perfect in his a'maal, e.g. if awe and reverence are predominant in him, the rebellion and pride of the nafs will be defeated and tawaadhu (humility) and zuhd (abstinence) will develop. If love for Allah becomes dominant, the Saalik will love to remain aloof from people.

If the tajalli (Divine Illumination) is not of a high degree, the ahwaal will suffer a proportionate deficiency, and in turn the practical deeds will become correspondingly defective. Thus riya (show) and other spiritual aliments will influence the deeds of the Saalik.

You are blessed with Divine Ma'rifat so that by virtue of it you attain the ability of entering the lofty Divine Court. The waarid is sent to you so that you are released from the claws of aliens and emancipated from enslavement to the desires of the nafs. The purpose of the waarid is to free you from the prison of your existence and deliver you into the vast realm of the mushaahadah of your Master.

The meaning of waarid here is Divine Knowledge, subtleties, mysteries and gifted knowledge which involuntarily enters into the heart of the Saalik. In the aforementioned statement, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) mentions three factors which occasion the incidence of waaridaat.

When the Saalik initially engages in thikr and shaghl, his heart is perplexed. He forcibly applies himself. This state remains for a short period of time. In this state, the heart begins to derive pleasure in thikr. This state progresses higher and the Saalik desires to be perpetually engrossed in thikr. When thikr permeates the heart, the incidence of waaridaat commences, e.g. he perceives with the eyes of the heart that all actions are the creation of

Khaaliq. He then no longer attributes any act to any being besides Allah. This is a waarid which enters his heart involuntarily. However, in the beginning it will be somewhat blurred and sometimes it will become manifest.

The purpose of this waarid is to increase in the Saalik enthusiasm for obedience and thikr so that he acquires the ability of admission to the lofty Divine Court. But, even in this state the desires of the nafs remain intact and complete ikhlaas is not yet achieved in ibaadat.

This initial waarid is followed by another waarid which may be the result of progress in the first waarid or it may altogether be a waarid of a different kind. The effect of this waarid will be the emancipation of the Saalik from aliens and nafsaani desires. The Saalik will now be drawn to Allah Ta'ala in ecstasy.

However, even after this second waarid, the Saalik's gaze is still on his nafs and he reposes a measure of reliance on himself. He also regards himself to be in good stead. Thus, he still remains imprisoned in the narrow confines of existence.

Then follows a third waarid which extricates the Saalik from his existence (wujood), i.e. the nothingness of his existence is in view. In this station the Saalik breaks free from all the chains and fetters of the nafs. He thus reaches the boundless realm of Mushaahadah-e-Haqq. In other words, with the batini eyes he vividly perceives his Maula (Master), Allah Ta'ala with greater perception than the perception of the corporeal eyes of physical objects. The realm in which the Saalik gains entry in this station has been described as boundless (vast or spacious) because as long as there remains any vestige of the nafs, the heart still dwells in a prison and when all vestiges of the nafs have been eliminated, the Saalik then emerges from his prison and steps into a vast boundless realm.

When the Saalik has entered into this lofty realm, he becomes absorbed in Mushaahadah-e-Haqq in all conditions and circumstances. There now remains no trace of anxiety and uncertainty in the Saalik. In all circumstances he is contented, be it sickness or health, adversity or prosperity.

Only those to whom these spiritual conditions occur, understand and perceive the pleasure. Whoever has not tasted, does not know. May Allah Ta'ala bestow to us this lofty bounty.

????? ?? ?? ? ?? ? ??

'And, that is not difficult on Allah.'

Waaridaat-e-Ilaahiyyah (Divine Inspirat-ions) mostly occur suddenly so that the bandah refrains from claiming this incidence on the basis of his spiritual capability and ability.

It has earlier been mentioned several times that the spiritual mysteries and subtleties inspired into the Saalik's heart are not the product of his effort and choice. Sometimes the bandah waits in expectation of waarid, but it fails to transpire. In most cases the occurrence of waarid is at a time when it was least expected. The occurrence transpires suddenly and unexpectedly.

The reason underscoring this suddenness is to prevent the Saalik from becoming a claimant of this occurrence. If waaridaat could have been the effects of the Saalik's volitional (ikhtiyaari) will, he would have suffered from the notion of his own capability and ability and put forward claims. Such self-esteem would then lead to his corruption and destruction. Caught up in ujub (vanity), he would become completely ghaafil (unmindful) of Allah Ta'ala.

Waaridaat are like gifts. Whenever Allah Ta'ala wishes, He directs His fadhl to the bandah and bestows this bounty of waaridaat to his heart.

The Saalik should inform only his Shaikh of his waaridaat and no one else. Should he divulge it to others, its effect will diminish in his heart and it will impede the relationship of truth which he has with Allah Ta'ala.

It is highly inappropriate for the Saalik to divulge the inspirations (waaridaat) of his heart to anyone besides his Shaikh. The nafs derives pleasure when this information is divulged because the Saalik's holiness, piety and greatness become confirmed in the estimation of others. This

pleasure of the nafs (ujub or vanity) provides impetus for the lowly, bestial attributes (Akhlaaq-e-Razeelah). In consequence, the effect of the waarid diminishes. The actual aim of the waarid was to destroy and suppress the rebellion of the nafs. However, when the nafs is strengthened, the effect of the waarid will diminish and the Saalik's bond of truth with his Rabb will be adversely affected. The bandah's relationship of truth with his Rabb envisages constant humility and subjection in the Divine Court. The state of slavery (abdiyat) and fear (for Allah) should never be absent. But when the Saalik reveals his waarid to others, he feels pleased with himself since others will think highly of him. He then becomes afflicted with the ailment of vanity. The disposition of Uboodiyat and Khushoo' (humility and fear) disappears. Truth with Allah Ta'ala, therefore, no longer remains.

At the time of the manifestation of knowledge and realities (by way of inspiration), the waarid is ambiguous. After committing it to memory, its explanation follows. In this regard it is said (in the Qur'aan):
'When We recite it (the Qur'aanic revelation), then pay attention to its recitation. Then, it is Our responsibility to have it explained.'

When the hearts of the }rifeen are freed from aliens and they emerge from the confines of their personal will, perpetually focusing their gaze on Allah Ta'ala, then haqaa-iq (realities) and spiritual knowledge are bestowed to them in the form of waaridaat cascading into the heart. But, at the time of the manifestation of such knowledge, the Divine Waarid overwhelms the heart and the senses. Thus, the inspirational knowledge acquired is concise (without detailed clarity). The clarity of the meanings of the Waarid is not attained at the precise time of the incidence of the inspiration because the comprehension of knowledge is the function of the senses. However, at the time of the transpiration of the spiritual knowledge all the senses become inoperative. Nevertheless, the concise meaning is impressed in his spiritual heart. Later, after the cessation of the progress of the waarid, the Saalik attains the meanings by virtue of his intelligence, rational and narrational knowledge. He is then able to expound this inspirational knowledge. This is comparable to Wahi (which is exclusive to Ambiyaa). During the incidence of Wahi, Rasulullah (ﷺ) would recite simultaneously with Jibraeel (alayhis salaam) in an attempt to memorise the revelation. Thereupon the following aayat was revealed:

"When We recite it, follow its recitation. Then, its explanation is Our responsibility."

The inspirational knowledge of the }rifeen resembles the incidence of Wahi in that at the time of its occurrence its meaning becomes impressed in a concise form in the heart of the Saalik. Its detailed elaboration follows later.

Do not become pleased with a waarid, the effect of which you are unaware. The desired benefit of clouds is not rain, but the growth of fruit.

The actual aim (maqsood-e-asli) of the waaridaat descending on the Saalik is the suppression of the nafs's rebellion, the elimination of the evil attributes and progress in obedience and attention on Allah Ta'ala. When there occurs such a waarid which produces no such effect, leaving the nafs in its former state, the Saalik should not be happy because the actual aim has not been achieved. There is no benefit in a waarid which leaves the nafs stagnant in its present state without producing any elevation in the Saalik's humility, fear and uboodiyat.

Many Saalikeen hanker after waaridaat and spiritual states (ahwaal) while being deficient in external deeds of virtue. This is a grave deception.

When the anwaar of waaridaat permeate you and spiritual mysteries are entrusted to you, do not desire their perpetuation because you (O Saalik!) being absorbed in the mushaahadah of Allah should be aloof and independent of all things. Nothing, however, can make you independent of Him.

Frequently, the Saalik deriving pleasure from a waarid on account of it being a new experience, turns his concentration towards it (the waarid). He sometimes gains the erroneous impression that this state (of receiving waaridaat) has become his permanent condition and he derives great pleasure therein. But, when the effect of this state dissipates, he is overtaken by grief. He, therefore, hankers after the acquisition of this condition little realising that he has already achieved the purpose of the waarid and that he still possesses the achievement inspite of the waarid's effect having disappeared. However, he does not now perceive the existence of the waarid's benefit

because his disposition has already become accustomed to it whereas initially he had derived pleasure since the experience of the waarid was yet new to him. The permeation of his zaahir and baatin with the anwaar of the waarid imposes the condition of uboodiyat on the entire being of the Saalik. He, therefore, does not perceive it since it is no longer a new experience.

It is for this reason that the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) instructs the Saalik: "When the anwaar of the waarid permeate you and your zaahir and baatin become elevated on account of the kayfiyat (state) of uboodiyat produced by the waarid resulting in the progress of Divine Attributes in the heart (i.e. the asraar or mysteries of the waaridaat), then do not desire the perpetuation of the waaridaat. Do not expect the initial state of dominance (ghalbah) to endure endlessly, nor become despondent on account of the dissipation of this initial pleasure.

Engross yourself in the solid state of Hudhoori which you have developed with Allah Ta'ala. The desire for ghalbah-e-haal (a temporary state of a spiritual experience in which the Saalik derives much ecstatic pleasure) and its pleasure is in reality a desire for ghairullah (things besides Allah). You should become absorbed in Divine Perception which will induce in you independence from all things besides Allah Ta'ala. Never permit other things to divert you from Allah Ta'ala, inducing in you an attitude of independence from Him.

There is no benefit for you in the ghalbah (domination) of the waarid. You have already achieved its purpose. Concern yourself with your true occupation, viz., your relationship with Allah Ta'ala.

The incidence of waaridaat will annihilate the foundation of all habits because when a king passes through a place all else becomes overshadowed. Since waarid emanates from the Divine Court of splendour and greatness, it destroys all natural habits and attributes which come in its path. It imposes truth over falsehood, utterly eliminating it.

At this juncture the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) explains the signs of waaridaat to distinguish these (waaridaat) from imagination and personal thought. When waaridaat settle in the heart, they completely annihilate and

eradicate the evil and bestial attributes of the nafs and create in the Saalik the lofty angelic qualities of virtue and high states.

Waaridaat are among the armies of Allah Ta'ala. When the royal army descends on a place, it destroys the enemy and overruns the place. Similarly, when waaridaat descend on the nafs, they overwhelm it and establish their domination. The true waarid coming from Allah Ta'ala the Qahhaar (The Wrathful One) is accompanied by the attributes of qahr (wrath) and ghalbah (domination).

Thus human qualities and evil attributes in the path of the waarid are utterly destroyed and uprooted. Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan:

"We fling the Haqq against the baatil, then suddenly it (falsehood) is destroyed".

THE TWENTY SECOND CHAPTER ON THE DIFFERENT STATES OF THE SAALIKEEN REGARDING THE BEGINNING AND END (OF THE SPIRITUAL SOJOURN)

Allah Ta'ala has appointed a group among His Servants for His obedience. He chose another group for His love. Allah Ta'ala aids both groups with His bounties, and the forgiveness of Allah cannot be prevented.

The topic has already been discussed earlier. The servants of Allah consists of two classes, viz. Ubbaad or Zuhhaad (both these refer to one class). They are also called Abraar. The second class is called Muqarrabeen. These two groups are mentioned here.

One group has been appointed by Allah Ta'ala for His worship. They engage in the outward (zaahiri) acts of ibaadat such as Nafl, Wazeefah, Sadqah, Hajj and service to mankind. They are occupied night and day in these acts of worship. Their purpose for executing acts of Ibaadat is admission to Jannat and salvation from Jahannum.

The second group has been selected by Allah Ta'ala for His love and proximity. While their external acts of ibaadat are less then the ibaadat of the first group, their actual deeds are with their hearts. At all times they are concerned with Allah Ta'ala. His remembrance permeates their hearts. There is nothing else besides Allah Ta'ala in their hearts. They are not concerned with Jannat and Jahannum.

Regarding these two group, Allah Ta'ala says:

"Most certainly, We shall aid this group and that group with the bounties of your Rabb. And, the bounties of your Rabb cannot be prevented."

Before this aayat, Allah Ta'ala mentions two groups. The group whose endeavour is for the }khirah, will attain its goal. The other group strives only

for worldly achievement. They will acquire only as much as Allah Ta'ala decrees. Their ultimate destination will be Jahannum. After mentioning these two groups, Allah Ta'ala states that He aids both groups. The group which strives for the }khirah is aided with A'maal-e-Saalihah and obstacles are cleared from their path. The aid for the worldly people consists of the ni'mat (comforts, luxuries, etc.) of the world. Engrossing themselves in worldly pleasures, they forget their Creator and lapse into transgression.

It is then mentioned that the bounties of Allah are not restricted. Whoever desires, should take of His bounties.

Similar are the other two groups (Abraar and Muqarrabeen). He aids the }bideen / Zaahideen according to their quest. They will occupy themselves in ibaadat night and day until they finally acquire their goal. Divine Aid for the Muqarrabeen corresponds to their elevated ranks. Since their goal is only the Zaat of Allah, every vestige of ghairullah has been expunged from their hearts. Therefore, both these groups are the special servants of Allah Ta'ala.

It is not necessary that a person whose exclusive rank is substantiated by way of karaamaat (miracles), is completely free of the calamities of the nafs. Sometimes karaamaat is awarded to even a person whose steadfastness in obedience of the Shariah has not yet reached the stage of perfection.

The masses are awed by the display of miracles. They have much faith in those who demonstrate karaamaat. In fact, they consider karaamaat to be the criterion of wilaayat (sainthood). The true and actual miracle is firmness on the Shariah and purification from evil qualities.

Here the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) dispels this error. It does not follow from the demonstration of miraculous acts that the person has attained complete freedom from the evil attributes of the nafs because sometimes even the imperfect man is awarded the ability to display karaamaat. In fact, similar acts, known as Istidraaj, are displayed by even non-Muslims. Thus, the display of miraculous acts is not the criterion for wilaayat. The criterion is strict adherence to the Shariah and purification of the nafs.

There are two kinds of concealment (i.e. concealing faults). One: Concealing one from the incidence of sins. Two: Concealment after commission of sin. The ordinary people are desirous for concealment of their sins so that their rank does not fall in the estimate of others. The khawaas (elite or the Auliya) seek concealment so that they do not fall in the estimate of their True King, Allah Ta'ala.

The servants of Allah Ta'ala seeking concealment for sins are of two types. The one kind seeks Divine Concealment from the incidence of sin. Inspite of the natural propensity of the nafs to sin and transgress, Allah Ta'ala saves them from the commission of sin. The second type seeks concealment after they have committed the sins. They are motivated to supplicate for forgiveness and concealment (of their misdeeds) to avoid being publicly disgraced. This motive in underlined by their deficiency in Imaan and their ignorance of the reality (Haqeeqat) of Imaan. Also, the perception of people is dominant in them and they have the hope of gaining some benefit from people. They also fear people, hence they supplicate to Allah Ta'ala to conceal their misdeeds.

While the concern of ordinary people is the estimate of others, the elite (khawaas) are concerned with Allah Ta'ala. They desire their nafs to be concealed and saved from sin solely for the sake of Allah Ta'ala. They fear being distanced from His mercy. Their gaze is not on others. They do not concern themselves with the criticism and praise of people. They neither have hope in people nor do they fear them. They have no reliance on people nor do they derive any peace or comfort from them. Their aim is the Pleasure of their Maula (Master), hence they abstain from sin.

Sometimes one of the stations (Maqaamaat) of Yaqeen is explained by a person who has become aware thereof and sometimes by a person who has already reached that station. The difference (between the two) is discerned by only the Ahl-e-Baseerat (the Auliya-e-Kaamileen). Others will be in doubt and uncertainty in this matter.

Maqaamaat-e-Yaqeen (the Stations of Yaqeen) refers to the branches of Imaan, i.e. zuhd (abstinence), wara' (piety), tawakkul (trust in Allah), qana'at (contentment), etc. When any of these attributes settles in the Saalik, its

influence waxes and wanes, rising and falling. For example, the influence of zuhd predominates the heart while at other times this influence wanes. It comes and goes. The state is not constant. This condition of inconsistency of the attributes is termed Haal. When the attribute becomes entrenched, it becomes inseparable from the heart. When it has become a permanent and an integral attribute of the heart, the condition is called Maqaam, e.g. when zuhd becomes a permanent state, it will be called Maqaam-e-Zuhd.

Sometimes a man who has not reached this Station (Maqaam) discusses and explains this concept. He is still in the state known as Haal which is in proximity to Maqaam. For example, he gives a discourse on Tawakkul although he, himself has not achieved excellence in it.

Sometimes the discourse is given by a man who has achieved the Maqaam of the attribute. There is a great difference in the exposition and style of both. But, everyone cannot distinguish the difference. Allah Ta'ala has imbued the people of Baseerat (spiritual insight) with true discernment. By virtue of their special insight they are able to distinguish between the degrees of Sidq (truth of an exceptionally lofty degree) of the speakers.

The one who is deficient, (i.e. the man who has not attained Maqaam) is pleased with the exposition he gives. He feels highly pleased with his research. There is some force and emphasis in his discourse because he has not reached that Station, but speaks as one observing from a distance. These realities, therefore, appear to him wonderful and marvellous. He considers only the knowledge of the attributes to be great. On the other hand, the discourse of the one who has attained the Station, will be a normal talk or discussion devoid of the frills and trappings of rehearsed speeches. This could be better understood by an analogy. When a person sees a city for the first time, the sight and attractions appear to be wonderful whereas these things are normal for the local residents.

The efficacy of the discourses of these two persons will differ. The speech of the one deficient in his spiritual rank will initially attract people, making an impression on them. However, the effect of his speech will soon dissipate. On the other hand, the speech as well as the suhbat (company) of the Kaamil (fully qualified) may initially not be impressive. People may not

understand his talks fully in the beginning. Despite this, the effect of his talk will be enduring.

Sometimes a man who has no qualification in either Haal or Maqaam also gives discourses on the topic of Maqaamaat. He studies books and delivers speeches to ensure a following. He endeavours to gain the confidence of people. He simply advertises piety. The sign of such a person is his inability to explain matters of Tasawwuf when questioned. He is able to speak only on the subject which he has swotted off from kitaabs. On the contrary, the Kaamil – the one who has reached the Maqaamaat – will tender convincing answers.

> The Majzubs are such persons whose anwaar precede their athkaar. On the contrary, the Saaliks are those whose athkaar precede their anwaar. There is another group whose athkaar and anwaar are simultaneous. There is also a group without athkaar and anwaar – Nauthubillah minthaalik! The one engaged in thikr to illuminate his heart and become a thaakir. He is the Saalik. The other one's heart became illumined, hence he became a thaakir. He is the Majzub. The third one whose anwaar and athkaar are equal, seeks guidance from his thikr and follows the noor of his heart.

b have already been presented earlier. ?The definitions of Saalik and Majz Here, further explanation of these two groups as well as of another two groups is given.

b is by the ?The Wusool (attainment of Divine Proximity) of the Majz inspiration of noor into his heart from the very beginning. By virtue of this inspired noor he gains Divine Proximity and acquires the station of Mushaahadah. Thereafter commences his sojourn towards the Divine bs are such persons whose ?Attributes and creation of Allah Ta'ala. Majz hearts are illumined with anwaar even before they engage in thikr. They do not first engage in thikr and shaghl. From the very inception Allah Ta'ala illumines their hearts and guides them. After being illumined, they engage in thikr. Thikr is not an onerous task for them. It is their state just as breathing is.

The Saalikeen, on the other hand, first engage in thikr and shaghl. They have to adopt mujaahadah and riyaadhat. They undergo difficulties in these exercises. After these efforts of toil and love, their hearts become illumined. The Noor of Yaqeen then enters their hearts and they attain Wusool Ilallah (Divine Proximity). Thus, the Saalikeen are those persons whose athkaar precede their anwaar.

There are also such persons whose anwaar and athkaar are simultaneous. The anwaar illumine their hearts the very moment they engage in thikr. These anwaar draw them to Allah Ta'ala. The Sulook (the spiritual journey requiring effort) and the Jazb (the magnetic attraction towards Allah Ta'ala) of these persons progress simultaneously.

There is another group of people who are bereft of athaar and anwaar. This group does not obey Allah Ta'ala nor do their hearts incline towards obedience and worship. We seek Allah's protection!

The purpose of the Saalik's thikr is to achieve illumination of the heart, hence thikr is first. After thikr, follows the rays of spiritual illumination b, his heart becomes illumined ?(anwaar). However, in the case of the Majz from the very beginning. As a result of this Noor he is drawn to Allah Ta'ala and he becomes a thaakir without any effort whereas the Saalik initially encounters difficulty in establishing thikr. Those in whom Sulook and Jazb exist simultaneously, in them prevail thikr and noor at the same time. By means of their thikr they attain the Road to Allah Ta'ala because their hearts are imbued with Noor-e-Baseerat (the Light of spiritual wisdom). The Road is, therefore, clear ahead of them. They follow the Noor of their heart and travel along the Path indicated by the Noor of their hearts.

The state of this third group is vastly different from the former two been. Initially, the Saalik is bereft of ?groups, viz. the Saalikeen and the Majz Noor. He engages in only Thikr-e-Lisaani (verbal thikr) or Thikr-e-Qalbi (thikr of the heart). Although he too walks along the Road, he is like a traveller in the darkness of the night without a lamp. He obtains a lamp after traversing the Path, attaining Divine Absorption (Jazb) ultimately Noor-e-

Baseerat. Thereafter he follows the direction indicated by the Noor of his heart.

b whose Jazb is prior, is like a traveller who sees a light in the ?The Majz distance although he is unable to see the road. However, he fixes the light as his beacon and walks ahead ultimately reaching his destination. The one whose Jazb and Sulook are simultaneous, is like a traveller who has a lamp and in the light of the lamp he discerns the road ahead. He moves on and on, guided by the illumination of the lamp.

> With His manifestation and the existence of His creation, He guides towards the existence of His Names. With the existence of His Names He guides towards His Attributes of Excellence and with His Attributes He guides towards His Perfect Being (Zaat-e-Kaamilah) because the presence of the Attributes independently is not possible. Thus, the Zaat (Divine Being) is first revealed to the Majzubeen. Thereafter they are diverted to the mushaahadah of the Sifaat (Attributes). Then they are turned towards the relationship of the Divine Names, and finally, they are brought back to His manifestations and creation. The affair of the Saalikeen is the opposite. Thus, the end of the Saalikeen's sojourn is the beginning of the Road of the Majzubeen whereas the beginning of the Road of the Saalikeen is the end of the Road of the Majzubeen. However, on more occasions than one do the Saalik and the Majzub cross paths – the Saalik on his way up (Urooj) and the Majzub on his way down (Nuzool).

The sun, earth, moon, stars and the entire magnificent creation indicate that the Creator of these objects is mighty, knowledgeable, majestic, wise and a Being Who wills. By contemplating on all these wonders, we are guided to the Divine Names. We realise that the Being Who created these wonders is Qaadir (Powerful), Aleem (One of Knowledge), Hakeem (Wise), Mureed (One Who wills), etc. The recognition of these Names leads us to the conclusion that He is a Being with Sifaat (Attributes) of Excellence (Kamaaliyyah). When He is Qaadir, Aleem and Hakeem, then logically He possesses the attributes of qudrat (power), ilm (knowledge) and hikmat (wisdom). The recognition of these attributes leads us to the conclusion that He is the Being par excellence. The Sifaat without Zaat are not possible.

Hence, the necessary conclusion is the existence of the Zaat. This is the state of the Saalikeen who progress from creation to Creator.

The gaze of the Saalikeen first focuses on created objects. This initiates in their hearts the process of logical deduction. Allah Ta'ala fixes their gaze on the Names as long as He desires. They then become absorbed in the journey of the Names, again resorting to the process of logical deduction by which they are guided to the Divine Attributes. Applying the process of logic to the attributes they ultimately reach the Divine Zaat.

been) attain the revelation of ?On the other hand, the people of Jazb (Majz the Holy Zaat from the very inception. As a result of their inherent propensity, they perceive the Divine Sifaat. Then, with their spiritual eyes they recognise the relationship between the Sifaat and the Zaat. They then turn towards the relationship of the Divine Names with creation. This state is followed by their perception of the manifestation of the Names, i.e. the effects of creation are related to the Divine Names.

As mentioned earlier, the Saalik's state of progress is in the opposite direction. Thus, the end (muntahaa) viz. the Divine Zaat, of the Saalik's b, and the beginning of the ?sojourn is the beginning (ibtidaa) of the Majz b's ?Saalik's sojourn, viz. the perception of creation, is the end of the Majz sojourn. However, there is a great difference between the two. It does not been is the exact end of the Saalikeen ?mean that the beginning of the Majz without any difference. In attaining their Goal, viz. Zaat-e-Muqaddasah (The Holy Being), the Saalikeen have to traverse all states and pass through all the valleys of the nafs. Only after considerable toil and struggle do they attain their Goal. Thus, although they acquire Jazb (absorption) on attaining the Goal, it is tempered with a degree of alertness. It is accompanied by perfect obedience and firmness.

been is Zaat-e-?On the contrary, although the beginning of the Majz Kaamilah (The Perfect Being, viz. Allah Ta'ala), they are completely unaware of the Road. They have no awareness of the tricks and traps of the nafs. It is for this reason that they lack firmness on the Shariah. In fact, sometimes they

perpetrate such acts which are repugnant in terms of the Shariah. They even neglect the Fardh and Waajib acts sometimes. But, they are not liable for punishment because the observance of the laws depends on intelligence. Since the anwaar have overwhelmed their Aql, their senses are over-powered. They, therefore, lack the ability of discernment.

Similarly, the beginning (ibtidaa) of the Saalikeen is not the end
been with exactitude. There is substantial difference. ?(muntahaa) of the Majz
Although the gaze of the Saalikeen in the beginning is on the object of creation, they do not perceive the Names and the Zaat, and although the end
been is the created objects, they do not recognise these as the ?of the Majz
manifestation of the Names.

The Saalikeen progress by means of thikr, shaghl, ibaadat and righteous deeds. Their way is fanaa (annihilation). Gradually the attributes of the nafs and the nafs as well, are annihilated. Along with this fanaa, they attain baqa (endurance) with the Divine Zaat and Sifaat.

been are ?The attributes of the nafs as well as the nafs itself of the Majz
annihilated in the very beginning. They are, therefore, brought down. Their way is baqa. The more they travel (in the spiritual realm), the more they come towards alertness. Hence, sometimes the Saalik in his onward progress
b on his downward journey from ?from creation to Creator meets the Majz
Creator to creation. Sometime they meet in the tajalli (illumination) of the Divine Names, i.e. both are illumined by the radiance of the Divine Names, but the Saalik advances by journeying in the Divine Attributes while the
b descends into the mushaahadah of created objects.?Majz

Sometimes the two meet in the station of the tajalli of the Divine Attributes and the same process of ascent and descent transpires.

b. People derive benefit from the ?The Saalik is superior to the Majz
b cannot benefit people as long as he ?Saalik. On the contrary, the Majz
remains in his state of Jazb (Divine Absorption). He, therefore, cannot be a

Shaikh to guide others. However, on the termination of his Nuzool (Descent), he becomes capable of being a Shaikh on condition that he is not dominated by Jazb. In the same way, as long as the Saalik does not attain the stage of Mushaahadah and Tajalli, he does not posses the ability of Mashiekhat (the office of a Shaikh).

There is a great difference between those who adduce the Divine Existence as proof for the existence of things, and those who produce the existence of things as proof for the existence of the Divine Being. He who deducts the existence of things from the existence of Haq Ta'ala, has confirmed Absolute existence (Wujood-e-Waajib), (viz. the existence of Allah Ta'ala) for the Being Who deserves it. He then substantiated the existence of temporal things on the basis of the Absolute existence (viz. the Original and True existence of Allah Ta'ala). He who deducts the existence of Allah Ta'ala on the basis of the existence of temporal things, does so on account of him being deprived of Divine Proximity. When He (Allah Ta'ala) is never absent, what need is there to deduce His existence?

been and Saalikeen. Since the ?This discusses a condition of the Majz

been, the rest of creation, ?Divine Zaat is initially manifested to the Majz Divine Names and Attributes are hidden from their gaze of insight (baseerat). After their nuzool (descent) into the lower strata of the Attributes, Names and finally creation, they enter into the mushaahadah of created objects. Now when they emerge from their state of Jazb, they confirm the existence of the created objects on the basis of the existence of Allah Ta'ala. In view of their gaze being on Allah Ta'ala from the very beginning, they prove the existence of creation from the fact of His existence.

The process of deduction of the Saalikeen is the exact opposite. Initially, the preoccupation of the Saalikeen is with creation. From their contemplative study of created objects they ultimately reach the conclusion of Divine Existence.

There is a great difference between these two methods of contemplative deduction. Whoever substantiates the existence of creation on the basis of Divine Existence, confirms existence for the Being Who is deserving of it

because true existence belongs only to Him. All other things are in reality non-existing. Their existence is only figurative.

On the other hand, whoever substantiates the existence of Allah Ta'ala on the basis of the existence of temporal things, does so because he is far from the Divine Court and is deprived. He is preoccupied with created objects and has not yet attained Divine Proximity. In reality, creation is non-existent, its existence being only figurative. He thus, makes deductions from non-existent things to substantiate the Divine Existence. He substantiates the conspicuous on the basis of the inconspicuous. He resorts to this process of logic because he is far from the True Existence and the truly conspicuous.

If such a person is not described as being far and deprived, it will lead to the conclusion that Allah Ta'ala is absent when in reality He is never absent (ghaa-ib), hence there is no need for such deduction. He is not far away needing external impressions to deliver us to Him. In fact, He is closer to us than our own lives. He is more conspicuous than the external facades of all things. Thus, this kind of reasoning (istidlaal) is in itself proof of the distance and deprivation of this person.

It should be noted that istidlaal (reasoning, logical deduction) in this context does not refer to rational (aqli) reasoning, or the system of logic employed in academic studies. It refers to inspirational (wijdaani) and dispositional (thauqi) logic (which is the product of contemplation and meditation on creation to arrive at transcendental truths).

The gracious aayat, 'The people of means should spend from their means.', refers to the state of those who have attained Divine Proximity, and the gracious aayat, 'Those whose means are little, should spend from whatever Allah Ta'ala has given them', refers to those who are in the process of journeying towards Him (i.e. they have not yet attained proximity).

"The people of means should spend from their means and those whose means are little should spend from whatever Allah has given them."

This Qur'aanic aayat pertains to divorced women who breast-feed their babies after divorce and have to be paid a wage because maintenance of the infant is the father's responsibility. If the father is a man of means, he should pay generously and if he lacks substantial means, he should give whatever he can afford.

The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) generalises this Qur'aanic verse in substantiation of his view. Although the circumstances which had occasioned the revelation of this verse were specific, the text is general, hence the validity of generalising. Or it could be said the verse is used as the basis for substantiating a view by way of analogical reasoning (Qiyaas). In the Shaikh's analogy, the first part of this aayat refers to the state of those Saalikeen who have already acquired the treasure of Wusool (attainment of Divine Proximity) and Mushaahadah (Divine Perception). Their hearts have been emancipated from the vision of all things besides Allah Ta'ala. They have arrived in the spacious field of Tauhid and their gaze is limitless. Divine Knowledge and mysteries have unravelled for them.

They have thus acquired a substantial treasure which they should now start sharing by imparting it to others. They should spend as much as they desire. This treasure which they possess will not decrease because the door of limitless knowledge has opened up for them.

The second part of this gracious aayat applies to those who are yet engaged in the journey of Sulook and have not yet reached the station (maqaam) of Mushaahadah. Their hearts have not yet been freed from beings other than Allah Ta'ala, hence they are still confined in the narrow limits of suspicion and baseless ideas. They should share with others whatever knowledge they have acquired from Allah Ta'ala, according to their ability and aid them.

However, they are not free to spend as they please because their capital is very little. They are yet in a very restrictive circle.

Those who journey towards Allah Ta'ala, are guided along by the anwaar of their mujaahadah (striving) and concentration (tawajjuh), and for those who have reached Allah are the anwaar of the Divine Face and Divine Presence.

Thus, for the former, the effort is for the anwaar, and for the latter are anwaar without effort because these belong exclusively to Allah Ta'ala. Therefore, say only: "Allah!", and leave the people to play in their falsehood."

This statement illustrates the difference in the states of the Saalikeen and Waasileen. (Waasileen are those who have already attained Allah's Proximity). Those servants of Allah engaging in Sulook and who have not yet reached the station of Mushaahadah and Tajalli, are guided along to Allah Ta'ala by the illumination (anwaar) of their mujaahadah (struggle against the nafs), ibaadat and athkaar. Their concentration is on the anwaar because the attainment of their goal is by virtue of these anwaar.

Those who have already reached the lofty Divine Court, for them there are the anwaar of Allah's Vision and Presence. Thus, their anwaar are Divine Emanation which is on account of the relationship of nearness and love of Allah they enjoy.

Whereas the first group's (Saalikeen) efforts are for the achievement of anwaar, illumination cascades on the second group (Waasileen) without their effort. Anwaar are not their goal. Allah Ta'ala has rendered them independent (or uncaring) of anwaar. Their state is reflected in the Qur'aanic verse:

"Say: 'Allah!', and leave them to play in their falsehood."

For them, there is only Allah Ta'ala.

Both the Saalikeen and the Waasileen have been prevented from considering their deeds and from the perception of their states. The Saalikeen have been prevented because they do not see themselves honest with Allah Ta'ala regarding their deeds and states. The Waasileen have been prevented because being lost in Divine Absorption they are detached from their deeds (a'maal) and states (ahwaal).

The difference between the Saalikeen and Waasileen is discussed here from another angle. Allah Ta'ala has diverted the gaze of both groups from their a'maal-e-zaahirah (outward acts of ibaadat) and from their ahwaal-e-

baatinah (spiritual states). The reason for this diversion differs for the two groups. Whenever the Saalik's attention is drawn to any of his acts or states, he does not see truth therein. He discerns some sort of spiritual calamity in his actions, e.g. riya (show), ujub (vanity). This results in a disturbance in his concentration on Allah. After repeated scrutiny of his actions, the Saalik finally refrains from looking at his own deeds and states. He then concludes that his deeds are futile, hence being concerned with them will only increase his problem and agitation. In this way has Allah Ta'ala prevented them from the perception of their own deeds and states.

On the other hand, the Waasileen are completely absorbed in Divine Perception (the mushaahadah of Allah Ta'ala, i.e. seeing Him with the eyes of the heart). This absorption makes them oblivious of their own deeds and stages. They attribute their deeds and states to Allah Ta'ala. They do not regard their deeds as their own volitional commission. In fact, they have abandoned their own will and intention.

Some people live a very long life although its benefits or Divine Aid are less. On the other hand, the life of some people is short, but their benefits or Divine Aid are considerable.

Some people live for a considerable time. The apparent demand of this long life is greater benefit for others. Also, such a person should have a greater accumulation of capital for the Hereafter. But, the opposite is observed. They derive little benefit from their longevity of life and they receive little Divine Aid. Their entire life is squandered in ghaflat (unmindfulness) and in the preoccupation with the fulfilment of nafsaani desires. They are either completely deprived of the great capital (necessary for salvation in the }khirah) or they acquire very little of it.

On the contrary, some people live a very short life, but their benefit and Divine Aid are considerable. They spend their short life in ibaadat, thikrullah and a'maal-e-saalihah. In this is also the significance of the Ummah of Muhammad (ﷺ) and its rank above the other Ummats, in that the life-span of the members of this Ummah is short while their virtues are more whereas the opposite is true of the other Ummats.

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"That is the grace of Allah which He gives to whomever He wishes."

The greater part of the life of some people pass by in negligence and towards the end of their life the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala turns towards them. Within a short while the loss of the past life is compensated. In fact, the gain is so great that others are unable to acquire it, inspite of spending a lifetime in abundance of worship. This is so because the pivot of excellence is ikhlaas, not abundance of a'maal. Precisely for this reason is one raka't of the }rif superior to a hundred thousand raka'ts of others.

When blessings are bestowed to a person, he acquires tremendous grace and spiritual favours from Allah Ta'ala. Words are incapable of expressing the wonder and greatness of such blessings. In fact these barakaat are unimaginable.

The meaning of barkat (blessing) in one's life is a Divine Bestowal of such alertness and diligence that the Saalik begins to value every moment of life. He treasures every breath, never permitting it to go to waste. He expends his full effort in physical and spiritual acts of ibaadat. Such a person acquires in a short time such wonderful bounties from Allah Ta'ala which are beyond description and on account of their purity and subtlety, they cannot even be detected. For example: Lailatul Qadr, although a single night, ibaadat therein is better than a thousand months.

The fadhl (kindness, grace) of Allah Ta'ala is not based on anyone's logic nor is it confined to any person or specific time.

This is a line which includes all the states from the beginning to the end of Sulook (some names of Auliya have been recorded here). After hamd (praises) and Salaat (salutation), know that the inception of the Saalik is the mirror of his goal (journey's end) and the abode of tajalli (illumination). The one who is guided by Allah Ta'ala reaches this destination.

The initial spiritual state of the Saalik is for him like a mirror and a source of illumination of his final state. This means that the state of spiritual elevation which the Saalik will reach at the end of his sojourn will correspond to his initial spiritual condition. The final state could be gauged from the initial condition. If in the beginning the Saalik expends all his endeavours in ibaadat, thikr and riyaadhat, it indicates that a wonderful portal of Allah's faidh (spiritual blessing) will be opened up for him. Furthermore, this Saalik will quickly reach his goal.

If his initial state is weak, i.e. his ibaadat, etc. is offered defectively, it indicates that his final condition too will be weak and defective.

When the initial state of the Saalik starts off with consciousness of Allah – the Saalik seeking aid from Allah Ta'ala in all his affairs, both worldly and Deeni – his end will be the meeting point with Allah Ta'ala. He will be completely detached from all creation and the means and agencies (asbaab). On the contrary, if in the beginning there is deficiency in his attribute of total dependence on Allah, his reliance being on material agencies and on his own intelligence, its effect will be on the end condition of the Saalik. His tawakkul on Allah will be defective even in the end.

Involvement in only such righteous deeds which you love and towards which you had hastened is worthwhile, and those false desires which you have abandoned for the sake of your true Maula (Master) should be shunned.

When the Saalik abandons worldly occupations and engrosses himself in the remembrance of Allah, then sometimes the nafs motivated by ignorance and worldly love yearns for the occupations which were abandoned. Thus it is said that it is worthwhile to involve oneself in only such deeds of virtue which were loved and quickly adopted for Allah's sake. However, the nafsaani desires which were abandoned earlier for the sake of Allah Ta'ala, should never again be adopted. It is imperative to steer away from them.

Undoubtedly, whoever has firm faith (Yaqeen) that Allah Ta'ala demands uboodiyat (servitude, worship), he will turn his attention towards Allah Ta'ala with genuine effort and desire. Whoever has realised that all affairs are in the

control of Allah Ta'ala, will repose his trust on Him and assign all his concerns and worries to Him.

When man fully understands and believes that Allah Ta'ala expects him to worship Him and to discharge the rights of ibaadat, he will expend all his endeavours in a genuine quest for reaching Allah Ta'ala. He will abandon his nafsaani desires. The deficiency in man's quest for Allah Ta'ala corresponds to the degree of the deficiency in his yaqeen. The greater the deficiency in yaqeen, the more defective will be the quest of the Saalik. The deficiency is the result of lack of truth in the quest. When the motivation is only Allah's Pleasure, it indicates that there is truth in the Saalik's quest. The aim of ibaadat should be only Divine Pleasure.

When man is convinced that everything which happens is in the control and power of Allah Ta'ala, his trust will be fully in Allah. In view if this attitude he will relieve himself of all worries by assigning these to Allah's Will. The result of this attitude is the abandonment of all worries. Worries, in fact, are the consequence of placing reliance on one's intelligence and efforts.

The Saalik should be true in his quest and rely on Allah Ta'ala for the attainment of his goal. He should not have trust on his efforts and schemes, neither should he bring on himself worries. Everything should be done calmly. When a person's reliance is on his own plans and intelligence, Allah Ta'ala assigns him to the machinations of his nafs. Thus, tafweez (to assign to Allah Ta'ala) and tawakkul are indispensable.

Most certainly, the pillars of life will perish and man's delight will be snatched away. Therefore, the intelligent man is he who gives priority to the everlasting abode over the perishable abode. He is more pleased with the everlasting abode.

Fearing the loss of worldly pleasures, many people do not involve themselves with Sulook. Weak Saaliks are sometimes accosted by this fear. Allaying their fears, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) says that at some time or the other, the world has to be either given up or the world itself will abandon man. At that time all the delightful things of man will be snatched away. The man of intelligence will, therefore, choose the everlasting abode of the

Hereafter. He will be more pleased with the Hereafter. This does not necessarily mean that he does not derive any pleasure whatever from worldly things. Such a condition is beyond human nature. It only means that in relation to this world, his pleasure and yearning for the }khirah are greater.

The noor of disillusionment with this transitory abode kindled in his baatin (spiritual heart) and its glitter illumined his zaahir (physical being). He thus closed his eyes and turned away from this earthly abode. He neither made this world his homeland nor a residence. He lived on earth advancing towards Allah Ta'ala. For his advance he sought Allah's aid and he pressed on towards Him.

Initially, when the intelligent Saalik musters up courage to abandon the world, its delights and pleasures, he experiences some strain and difficulty. However, after a few days a noor kindles in his heart on account of his disillusionment with this world. The glitter of this noor becomes manifest on his face and body. This is the sign of the acceptance of his endeavours. Therefore, this intelligent Saalik closes his eyes on this ephemeral existence. Thus, he does not regard this world as his abode or home. His heart does not derive peace on earth. Instead, he concentrates on his advance towards Allah's Proximity. In this endeavour he seeks Allah's aid. With Divine Aid he continues his advance towards Divine Proximity. He does not rely on his own efforts for achieving the goal.

No one can achieve salvation on the strength of his efforts and deeds. Every gain is because of Allah's fadhl. The Saalik whose gaze is not on his mujaahadah, riyaadhat, thikr and shaghl, but is focused on Allah's mercy and kindness, will reach his destination. This is the initial state of the Saalik.

The mount of his resolution (azm) does not rest or halt at any place. It is perpetually on the move until it reaches the Divine Court. That is the place of many spiritual revelations.

A variety of spiritual states draws the Saalik. Among those states are lath-Zaat (pleasure), farah (happiness), suroor (delight), anwaar (spiritual rays of illumination), karaamaat (miracles), mukaashafaat (revelations), haqaa-iq

(realities of things), uloom-e-wahbiyyah (Divinely-bestowed knowledge) and asraar (Divine Mysteries).

If the Saalik is attracted to any of these states, he becomes stagnant. His progress comes to a halt. However, if Allah's fadhl is turned to him and his success is decreed, then the Saalik will leave all these states and continue his journey of progress towards Allah Ta'ala. He will not rest at any station in his spiritual sojourn. He presses onwards until he reaches Allah's lofty court and the station of love where the heart attains true love and pleasure. This station is called Maqaam-e-Mufaatahah. In this station Divine Blessings and benefit commence their decent on his heart. This is also the station of Muwaajahah, i.e. the state of Allah Ta'ala focusing His Attention of Rahmat to the Saalik. It is also Maqaam-e-Mujaalasat, i.e. the bandah enjoys Divine Presence. It is also Maqaam-e-Muhaadasah, i.e. Allah Ta'ala showers mysteries, secrets and subtle Divine Knowledge on his heart. Maqaam-e-Mushaahadah is the station where the bandah perceives Allah Ta'ala with his spiritual eyes while he is oblivious of his physical senses. Maqaam-e-Mutaala'ah is the station attained when Maqaam-e-Mushaahadah has become entrenched. In this state the bandah is completely absorbed in Divine Cognition, perceiving the Beauty and Splendour of Allah Ta'ala every moment. This is the state known as Wusool, i.e. the Goal where the bandah has reached Allah Ta'ala.

Then that holy Court becomes the nest for the birds of their hearts. This nest is fixed as their home and therein do they find rest.

After attaining Allah's Proximity, the Holy Court of Allah Ta'ala becomes the home of His servants just as the nests are for the birds. This, the servants of Allah, adopt as their residence wherein they find peace and rest. Just as the birds find rest in their nests after the day's activity, so too is the condition of the Saalikeen. Ostensibly he associates with people, but his peace and tranquillity are in the station of Mushaahadah. This lofty stage is called Maqaam-e-Fanaa. The various spiritual stations of maximum elevation are all conglomerated in the stage of Fanaa. This station is also called Maqaam-e-Urooj and Maqaam-e-Jama'. It is the ultimate goal of the Saalik. It is the end of Sulook.

When the Saalik descends to the domain of huqooq (the rights of others) and emotional desires, he does so with consent and firmness. Neither is he disrespectful to the huqooq nor does he have the motive of deriving benefit from nafsaani desires. On the contrary, he enters these domains only for the sake of Allah, with Allah's aid and seeking His succour. Thus, it is said (in the Qur'aan):

"Say: O my Rabb! Cause me to enter an entry of truth and make my exit an exit of truth.".

By implication the Saalik is saying: When You, O my Rabb, allow me (into Your Presence), let my gaze be only on Your power. When You bring me out, let my obedience and submission be to You. Appoint for me a strong helper who will assist me against my nafs and with me help others. Do not aid my nafs against me. Aid me in the perception of my nafs and annihilate my physical being.

When the Saalik is firmly entrenched in the state of Fanaa, i.e. all things besides Allah are completely erased from his heart, he becomes completely absorbed in the perception (mushaahadah) of Divine Beauty and splendour. His attention is diverted from all things. After having attained this elevated station, if Allah Ta'ala wishes to appoint the Saalik as a Sahib-e-Irshaad (a guide for others), He bestows to him the pedestal (maqaam) of Baqa and Farq. In other words, during the state of Fanaa, the full attention of the Saalik is riveted on Zaat-e-Haqq (The Divine Being of Truth). Everything else is obliterated from his vision. To him, every creation is non-existent.

When this state of Fanaa becomes entrenched, the Saalik is granted the concern (fikr) of creation (i.e. Allah Ta'ala turns the Saalik's attention towards others who will derive benefit from his association). However, there is a big difference between this concern for people and the earlier concern prior to his embarkation on the journey of Sulook. While the former concern (iltifaat) was in the state of being oblivious of Allah Ta'ala (other motives being the cause of the concern), the present concern is in reality directed to Allah Ta'ala. In this stage the gaze towards creation is like looking in a mirror at the reflection of the Divine Being since the entire creation is the manifestation of His beauty and splendour.

At this juncture, these Saalikeen are the media of spiritual benefit and guidance for others. They, then associate with people. This station is

described by the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) as ‘the heaven of Huqooq’ and ‘the ground of desires’. In this portrayal, the idea of the difficulty of the task of these Saalikeen is presented. The rights which devolve upon them as a result of their association with people are comparable to the heaven. Just as it is difficult and almost impossible to ascend into the heaven, so too is the fulfilment of these Huqooq. It is not within the reach of everyone to do justice to the Huqooq arising from association with people.

The ‘ground of desires’ means their nafsaani desires which were completely erased from their gaze during the state of Fanaa. When these illustrious persons descend from their lofty station to these rights and desires, it is only by the command of Allah Ta’ala. If they had a choice in the matter, they would never prefer to emerge from the state of Fanaa to descend to creation.

This descent occurs after the state of Fanaa has become entrenched. Also, this state of Fanaa is achieved after entrenchment in yaqeen and ma’rifat. Hence, their descent towards the Huqooq is not accompanied by negligence and disrespect. The earlier state, i.e. prior to Fanaa – of unmindfulness of the rights of others – no longer exists. Ghaflat is completely abandoned. They are perpetually alert. If someone persecutes them, they do not seek vengeance because the heart is attached to Allah Ta’ala at all times. They recognise that it is Allah Ta’ala who has imposed on them the persecutor. If someone praises them, they do not forget their nafs. In short, in the fulfilment of their duties and discharge of the rights, there is no carelessness. They execute their obligations with maximum diligence and concern. They are never unmindful of Allah Ta’ala, not even for a moment.

Their descent into the realm of emotion is not for the acquisition of carnal desire and pleasure. It is not for personal benefit. Prior to the state of Fanaa, eating, food, garments and sex were for self-gratification and pleasure. Now after the attainment of the lofty state of Fanaa, their indulgence in these mundane acts is with the aid and consent of Allah Ta’ala and solely for His Sake. The nafs has absolutely no share in these seemingly worldly activities.

When the Saalik enters this stage, he gains greater perfection. This is the second journey of the Saalik. The first journey is called Taraqqi or Urooj

(Elevation) and the second journey is termed Nuzool (Descent). The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) substantiates both these journeys on the basis of the Qur'aanic aayat:

"Say: O my Rabb! Enter me an entry of truth and make me emerge an exist of truth."

The 'entry of truth' is a reference to the journey of elevation because this journey leads the Saalik into the Divine Court. In this state of Fanaa, he becomes completely dissociated from creation.

The meaning of 'exit of truth' is the journey of descent. This journey takes the Saalik towards creation and he passes on his spiritual treasure to people.

In his upward journey of truth (Urooj), the Saalik perceived only the might and power of Allah Ta'ala. He does not attribute any action to himself. In the state of descent (Nuzool), the Saalik is in absolute submission to his Khaaliq (Creator). He is pleased with whatever station to which Allah Ta'ala despatches him. His nafs, therefore displays no desire for remaining in the station of elevation because he has whole-heatedly submitted himself to the duty imposed on him by Allah Ta'ala.

At the end of this subject, the Shaikh offers a supplication for steadfastness (istiqaamat). The Saalik supplicates for Divine Aid. This is the state of the kaamil (the one who has attained perfection) every moment of his life. Allah's aid descends on him constantly.

THE TWENTY THIRD CHAPTER ON QABDH AND BAST

He (Allah) kept you in the state of qabdh so that you do not remain in the state of bast, and He brought you into the state of bast so that you are not left in the state of qabdh. He extricated you from both states so that you be devoted to your Master alone.

(Qabdh is a spiritual state of extreme despondency. Bast is the opposite of qabdh. It is the state of spiritual exhilaration.)

Qabdh and bast are two states which settle over the Saalik in alternating order – one after the other. In qabdh such a waarid (spiritual current) of the Divine Attributes of splendour (jalaal) and wrath (qahr) settle on the heart, which displaces the heart's exhilaration and tranquillity resulting in a shadow of despondency. There remains no serenity in thikr and worship.

In the state of bast, the waarid passing over the heart emanates from the Divine Attributes of beauty and mercy. It results in extreme elation. The exhilaration experienced is beyond the Saalik's control. In this state he is unable to contain his spiritual happiness.

The Saalik who has progressed ahead of the initial stage of Sulook experiences the conditions of qabdh and bast. In the beginning he experiences khauf (fear) and raja (hope). The difference between qabdh/bast and khauf/raja is that the latter is the product of reflecting on a future event whereas the former is the consequence of the incidence of waaridaat at the present time.

Here the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) explains the wisdom (hikmat) of qabdh and bast. Addressing the Saalik, he says that the purpose of bast is to take the Saalik out of the state of qabdh. If it was not for bast, the Saalik would perpetually remain in the state of qabdh. Bast being the opposite of qabdh, displaces it. One of these states will always be with the Saalik who is in the middle stage of Sulook. Either he will be in qabdh or bast. It is,

therefore, necessary to alternate these states, otherwise he will perpetually remain in only one state.

Qabdh is the effect of the Divine Attribute of Jalaal (power, splendour, glory). If the Saalik remains in qabdh, within a few days its effect would become unbearable for him. It will then not be surprising if he is destroyed. In fact, such episodes of self-destruction have happened. It is for this reason that the state of bast is bestowed to him.

The state of qabdh is imposed on the Saalik so that he does not always remain in the state of bast because in this latter condition the nafs derives pleasure. Thus, the state of continuos bast will bring about a reduction in the attribute of ibaadat. The longer this state remains, the graver the danger.

These two states do not occur to the kaamil (the Saalik who has attained perfection). He experiences a condition in between qabdh and bast. Neither state is predominant. Hence, the Saalik is ultimately taken out of these two states so that his attention is focused only on Allah Ta'ala. In the states of qabdh and bast the Saalik's attention is diverted to his states because in these two states is their dominance (ghalbah) over the Saalik. In the state of qabdh, the Saalik will endeavour to eliminate the impressions of despondency and grief while the heart derives pleasure in the state of bast. Thus, in both states the attention is not towards Allah Ta'ala. The state of the kaamil is equilibrium (i'tidaal). Neither can his state be called qabdh nor bast.

Istiqaamat (steadfastness) and I'tidaal (equilibrium) are achieved by way of qabdh and bast. After the ups and downs of these two states, a state of equilibrium settles on the heart.

In the state of bast, the Aarifeen are more fearful than in the state if qabdh. In bast only a few remain within the confines of adab (respect).

Since the state of bast conforms to the desires of the nafs, the }rifeen in this state are more fearful than in the state of bast. In bast the nafs may lose itself in pleasure and proclaim its spiritual conditions and miracles. There is the danger of the Saalik making claims of loftiness. Sometimes when the

state of bast becomes intense, the Saalik utters such statements which are in conflict with the lofty state of Allah Ta'ala. It is for this reason that the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) says that only a few among the Saalikeen succeed in observing the limits of respect (adab).

On the contrary, since qabdh is a state in conflict with the nafs, the attributes of humility, weakness and servitude prevail. The Saalik perceives himself overwhelmed by Divine Wrath and Power.

In the state of bast, the nafs has its share of pleasure, but in the state of qabdh the nafs has no share.

The basis for the previous statement is given here. In the state of bast the limits of adab (respect) are generally not observed because the nafs receives its share of pleasure in the condition of bast. Unmindfulness and forgetfulness are necessary corollaries (lawaazim) of the nafs's derivation of pleasure. Also, the ego asserts itself. The acquired inspirational knowledge, mysteries, subtleties and stations of elevation are in front of the Saalik. Thus, in the state of bast, he considers himself to be among the elite. These attitudes are negatory of Uboodiyat. On the other hand, the nafs obtains no pleasure in the state of qabdh. It, therefore, remains within the limits of rectitude. Hence, the }rifeen prefer the state of qabdh to the state of bast.

Frequently in the darkness of qabdh you are granted such knowledge and insight which you will not acquire in the brightness of bast. It is, therefore said (in the Qur'aan): 'You do not know who is more beneficial for you among them.'

Qabdh is displeasing to the nafs while bast in pleasurable. The Saalik, therefore, fears the state of qabdh and thinks of it to be a means of distancing him from Divine Proximity while he loves bast and regards it to be a medium for attaining Divine Proximity. The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh), therefore, explains the wisdom of qabdh.

Qabdh is compared to darkness because in this state the Saalik is motionless. The nafs is broken and forlorn, hence it does not move towards

its excellences nor does it advance claims of loftiness. In this forlorn and motionless condition it turns in supplication to Allah Ta'ala. The state of bast is described as brightness because the nafs is in motion just as people are in motion during daytime. In this state the nafs is desirous of displaying its knowledge of spiritual realities.

The Saalik is advised not to fear the state of qabdh because sometimes in the state of qabdh the Saalik is granted such transcendental knowledge and mysteries which he does not attain in the state of bast. This is occasioned by the humility and forlornness of the nafs produced by the state of qabdh. Humility is the cause for Allah's grace and kindness. The treasure of Uloom and Ma-aarif is granted to the Saalik in this state of extreme humility.

The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) then cites the following Qur'aanic aayat:
"You do not know who among them is of greater benefit to you."

This aayat discusses the issue of inheritance. The instruction is to execute the laws of inheritance as commanded. You do not know which heir is of greater benefit to you. Therefore, do not use your own opinion and fancy in matters pertaining to inheritance. Inspite of a man being able to recognise the people who will be his heirs, he is told that he in reality is not aware of the one who is of greater benefit to him. On the basis of this aayat, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) says that the Saalik too does not know which of the two states (bast and qabdh) is better for him. In this case his unawareness will be greater than the unawareness regarding heirs (referred to in the aayat) because the state of qabdh and bast are spiritual conditions which cannot be fathomed by the physical senses. It is, therefore, essential that the bandah refrains from his opinion in these states. Allah Ta'ala knows which state is best for him.

THE TWENTY FOURTH CHAPTER ON ANWAAR AND THEIR CATEGORIES

The anwaar of ibaadat and riyaadhat are the mounts of the hearts and asraar (spiritual faculties) of the mureedeen.

According to the Sufiyah, qalb (heart) in this context refers to the physical heart and sirr (plural asraar) means the spiritual heart. The people of spirituality (Ahl-e-Baseerat and Ahl-e-Idraak) perceive these spiritual faculties.

The heart is divided into several departments. The rays of illumination (anwaar) which the Saalik acquires from ibaadat and mujaahadah are like the mounts for the zaahir and the baatin of the heart. Mounts deliver travellers to their destination. Similarly, these anwaar take the Saalik to his destination viz. The Divine Presence. Thus, it behoves the Saalik to impose on himself ibaadat and riyaadhat. He should not regard the anwaar and the pleasure he experiences to be the maqsood (goal). Rather, they are the means for the attainment of the goal. Just as the mounts (vehicles) are not the goal of travellers, so too, the anwaar are not the goal.

Just as darkness is the army of the nafs, noor is the army of the heart. When Allah Ta'ala desires to assist any of His servants, He aids them with the army of noor, and He cuts off the aid of aliens and darkness.

In the terminology of Tasawwuf, the propensity or capacity in man to incline to evil is termed the nafs. It stirs man to adopt disgraceful qualities. The qalb (heart) is the substratum (mahal) of the praiseworthy attributes.

The nafs of man is so much absorbed in self-opinion, vanity, ignorance and emotions that it remains oblivious of these evils in itself. Its engrossment in these evils precludes it from perceiving them. Its natural inclination is evil and corruption.

In the heart of the Mu'min is the Divinely Bestowed Noor of Tauheed which draws him towards lofty attributes, worship and obedience.

The meaning of zulmat (darkness) is the attributes of the nafs and noor refers to the illumination of the heart. This zulmat is the army of the nafs, while Noor is the army of the heart. The conflict between these opposites is perpetual. The nafs with its army attacks the qalb preventing it (qalb) from acting according to its demands (of virtue). Meanwhile, the heart endeavours to conquer the nafs by means of its noor. Sometimes the nafs gains the upperhand, leading to the bandah committing sin and abstention from obedience. Sometimes the noor of the qalb asserts its dominance, overwhelming the nafs.

If Allah Ta'ala has decreed fortune for the servant, He aids him with an army of anwaar in his struggle against the nafs. Allah Ta'ala reveals to him the contempibility of this world and its transitory nature. The evils of the nafs are exposed for him and darkness and all alien objects are dispelled from the heart. These foreign bodies which had taken up an abode in the heart and were being supported by the nafs, are deprived of their aid when the anwaar become dominant. Gradually, in stages, the goal is attained.

Allah forbid! If misfortune is decreed for the servant, the zulmat gains in intensity. This intensity is an incremental process resulting in the complete disappearance of the heart's noor. The world then dominates the person.

When a struggle ensues between the nafs and the qalb, the Saalik should turn his attention to Allah Ta'ala, supplicating for His aid. He should increase his Thikr and repose his trust in Allah. Insha'Allah, the demands of the nafs will be subjugated and the heart's noor will prevail.

Revelation of haqaa-iq (transcendental realities) and magheebaat (unseen things) is the function of noor. Perception of these realities is the function of the heart's gaze while advancing or diverging from them is the task of the heart.

The corporeal eye visualises objects with the aid of external light, e.g. the sun's light or candle light. In the absence of such light, the eye is unable to see. The operation of the heart's vision is similar. As long as it lacks the aid of noor it is unable to exercise spiritual vision. Noor here means the noor of Yaqeen and Imaan which Allah Ta'ala bestows to his special servants.

By virtue of the noor of Yaqeen, hidden transcendental realities become conspicuous to the heart, e.g. prior to the acquisition of Noor-e-Yaqeen the transitoriness of the world, the perpetuity of }khirah, the advantage of obedience and the destruction of sin were related to awareness and belief, i.e. the servant had their knowledge and believed in them. (These were in his ilm and i'tiqaad.) After the acquisition of Noor-e-Yaqeen this knowledge becomes conspicuous to the vision of the qalb. The certitude gained is just as that of the perception of the physical eyes of physical objects.

This revelation is the result of the Noor which has been acquired. This is like a person who, although having knowledge of the contents in a room, is unable to see them in the darkness on account of the absence of light. When a light is produced, his eyes perceive the objects with great clarity. Thus, the function of noor is to render visible the transcendental objects of knowledge. The heart's vision then perceives them. If the heart possesses vision, it will perceive, otherwise not.

Once the perception (the heart's visualisation) is proper, then it is the heart's function to move in the direction of virtue and to diverge from evil, e.g. the transitoriness of the world and perpetuity of }khirah are revealed. The revelation (inkishaaf) is because of the noor. The perception will be by spiritual vision (idraak-e-baatinah). Advancing towards the }khirah and turning away from the world are the acts of the heart. The physical limbs of the body are subservient to the heart. They will move in consonance with the heart.

He has brightened physical creation with His Aathaar (Impressions), and the spiritual heart with the anwaar of His Ausaaf (Attributes). Therefore, the anwaar of the physical dimension becomes hidden. But the anwaar of the heart's secrets are not concealed.

The sun, moon, starts and all creation are the aathaar (impressions or effects) of Allah's attributes of power (qudrat) and wisdom (hikmat). Allah Ta'ala has brightened His physical creation, the heavens and earth, with the noor of the impressions of His perfect attributes, i.e. He brightened the heavens and earth with the light of the sun, moon and stars. We are, therefore, able to see His physical creation and thereby derive benefit from the good things while abstaining from the harms of harmful objects.

He has brightened the spiritual dimension of the heart (the baatin) with the noor of His attributes of beauty (jamaal) and splendour (jalaal). Thus, inspirational knowledge (Uloom) and transcendental realities and truths (Ma-aarif) are revealed to the inner (or spiritual) hearts of the }rifeen. They perceive the inner spiritual attributes and adopt the praiseworthy ones (Aussaf-e-Hameedah) while abandoning the evil ones (Ausaaf-e-Razeelah).

Since the noor of the heavens and earth is temporal, being acquired from the sun and moon, it becomes over-shadowed and recedes into concealment because temporal things undergo changes. On the other hand, the noor of the spiritual heart emanates from the attributes of Allah Ta'ala. Since Allah's attributes are eternal, this Divine Noor is never over-shadowed, hence it cannot be hidden. However, the perception of this noor diminishes when human qualities assert their domination.

The intelligent man chooses the eternal and abandons the temporal entities which undergo change.

The horizon where anwaar rise is the quloob (hearts) and asraar (spiritual faculties) of the Aarifeen.

The emanation of ma-aarif and uloom is from the baatini hearts of the }rifeen. Their hearts resemble the heaven in which lie the horizons for the rising of the sun and moon. The noor emanating from the hearts of the }rifeen is infinitely superior to the radiance of the sun and moon. It is mentioned in the Hadith that if the noor of the Imaan of the lowest ranking Muslim is manifested, east and west will be lit up and the light of the sun and

moon will be eclipsed. When this is the brilliance of the noor of the lowest ranking Muslim, then the noor of the }rifeen is beyond description.

The aid of this Noor-e-Yaqeen which is entrusted in the hearts of the Aarifeen is from that noor which emanates from the treasures of the unseen realms. One noor is the heart's noor by means of which the aathaar (effects) of the True Cause, Allah Ta'ala, are made manifest. Another noor is the noor which opens up for you His attributes of excellence (kamaal).

The noor of Yaqeen embedded in the hearts of the }rifeen progresses with the aid of the noor which descends from the treasures of the unseen realm (ghaib). The }rif is perpetually in progress. The noor of his Imaan constantly increases. The stages of his Yaqeen rise continuously because such stages are infinite. There is no end to this process of elevation.

The noor emanating from the eternal Divine Attributes develops the Noor-e-Yaqeen of the }rif. Thus the Yaqeen of the }rif is in the process of constant increase.

The noor entrusted to the hearts of the }rifeen is of two kinds. The one kind is the medium for revelation of the aathaar of Allah, the True Cause, i.e. the conditions and circumstances of creation are revealed to him. This type of revelation is called Kashf-e-Soori.

The other kind is the noor by means of which the qualities of Allah's splendour and beauty are revealed, e.g. Allah's mercy, wrath, etc. This noor is the emanation of the manifestation (tajalli) of the Divine Attributes. This second kind of revelation is called Kashf-e-Ma'nwi.

One type of noor from the treasures of ghaib reaches only the zaahir of the heart. The other type is commanded to penetrate the centre of the heart.

The anwaar of Divine Knowledge and mysteries which settle in the hearts of the }rifeen from the treasures of ghaib, illumine their hearts. There are two

types of these anwaar. The one type settles only on the outer facade of the heart while the second type penetrate into the innermost recess of the heart.

The effect of the noor settling on the outer heart is the perception by the heart of its nafs as well as of Allah Ta'ala. Both this world and the Hereafter are kept in view. The presence of foreign things still remains in the heart. Thus, the Saalik sometimes inclines to his nafs and sometimes to Allah Ta'ala. Sometimes he desires the }khirah and sometimes the world.

The effect of the anwaar which have penetrated the innermost recesses of the heart is the entrenchment of Allah's remembrance in the heart. Only Allah Ta'ala is in the heart. All other things are expelled from the heart of the Saalik by these anwaar. He is not enslaved to anyone besides Allah.

According to some }rifeen, as long as Imaan is confined to the zaahiri qalb (outer heart), the servant is the lover of both Allah and the world. Such a servant is sometimes in communion with Allah Ta'ala and sometimes in collusion with his nafs. When Imaan enters the interior of the heart, the servant renounces the world.

Sometimes when anwaar settle on you, your heart is loaded with base imaginations. The anwaar thus return to the abode from whence they had arrived. Expel all aliens from your heart and Allah Ta'ala will fill it with ma-aarif and asraar.

The qalb of man is a celestial faculty which has the ability of reflecting Divine Knowledge, mysteries and celestial illumination. But, on account of man's preoccupation with mundane matters and emotional issues, these things become impressed in his mind. These impressions are then mirrored in the heart resulting in the diminishing of the heart's inherent ability. It then resembles a mirror on whose surface dust and grime have settled, blurring the images or impeding visionary perception thereof.

When the Saalik engages in thikr and shaghl, adopts solitude, decreases speech, reduces association with people and concentrates on the purification of his heart, then the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala focuses on him. He becomes

polished and illumined. He gains the ability for the absorption of Divine Anwaar.

Sometimes the outer heart becomes somewhat illumined. It thus gains the ability to reflect these anwaar. However, when the anwaar reach this heart, they find it engrossed in worldly preoccupations. Such a heart is unable to absorb the anwaar, hence these celestial rays return to their celestial abode from whence they had emanated. It is, therefore, essential for the Saalik to cleanse his heart from all foreign bodies and substances. He should keep the mirror of the heart thoroughly polished and Allah Ta'ala will fill it with Divine Knowledge, mysteries and subtleties.

The value of the anwaar of the asraar (spiritual faculties in man) cannot be known without the realm of the Aakhirah just as the rays of the heavenly stars are not manifested without the universe.

Just as the substratum for the manifestation of the light of the sun, moon and stars is this universe, so too, is the }khirah the abode for the manifestation of the anwaar of man's spiritual faculties.

Since these anwaar are concealed from the vision of people, their value is neither appreciated nor understood. The intelligent Saalik should not grieve on account of this attitude of people nor should he care because the world is not the substratum for the manifestation of these anwaar. The anwaar of the unknown men of Allah living in renunciation and seclusion will glitter in the }khirah. It is in that abode where their worth and value will be appreciated.

THE TWENTY FIFTH CHAPTER ON NATURAL DISPOSITION AND DIVINE PROXIMITY

Your reaching Allah is by way of your natural and spiritual disposition and faculties (i.e. with the soul). You reach Him with your gaze of spiritual insight (nathr-e-baseerat). Our Rabb cannot be physically joined by anything. He is beyond such union.

The meaning of wusool (reaching) with Allah is not a physical union as is the fusion of two physical objects. This type of union is a characteristic of material objects. Allah Ta'ala is devoid of physical or material dimensions. The Sufi concept of Wusool is a spiritual union in which the soul visualises Allah Ta'ala with such clarity which negates the need for any proof (daleel). The yaqeen acquired is of such a high degree which excels the confidence an observer gains from his physical visualisation of objects. It is possible for the eye to sometimes err in its vision, but such an error is precluded in ilmul-yaqeen. This exceptionally high degree of spiritual perception is called mushaahadah. It is also referred to as wusool, tajalli and Faidh-e-Rahmaani (Divine Munificence of The Merciful One).

This mushaahadah becomes a permanent inseparable attribute of the heart just as vision is for the eye.

If the only way of reaching Him was by the annihilation of your evils and your claims (of vanity), never would you reach Him. When he desired to bring you to Him, He concealed your attributes in the shadow of His attributes and covered your language in the veil of His language. He then brought you to Him by virtue of His grace which He directed to you. You did not reach Him on account of the deeds you presented to Him.

The Wusool or Mushaahadah described earlier is attained when the nafs becomes lifeless. Every evil quality and demand has been expelled from it. It no longer has any motives and desires. It becomes like a lifeless person in the custody of a living person. The attainment of such a stage is beyond the ability of the bandah.

If Allah Ta'ala had decreed that a bandah cannever reach Him as long as he does not kill his nafs by means of his own efforts of riyaadhat and mujaahadah, then no one would have attained His Proximity because evil is the natural propensity of the nafs. When Allah Ta'ala wishes to favour a bandah with His Proximity, He illuminates the bandah with the rays of His lofty attributes. The bandah's attributes are then over-shadowed and concealed. Thus, the bandah reaches Allah Ta'ala by virtue of Divine Grace and Mercy. The bandah does not attain Wusool on the strength of his a'maal and mujaahadah. In fact, this is not possible.

The elimination of the natural, despicable qualities of the nafs does not occur, rather these lowly attributes are over-shadowed by the manifestation of the radiance of the Divine Attributes. Despite this, riyaadhat by virtue of Allah Ta'ala directs His grace to the bandah when he initiates the process of effort (mujaahadah). But, the cause of attaining Allah's proximity is not the Saalik's effort, but is the fadhl of Allah.

While the Saalik should not relax in his a'maal-e-saalihah and mujaahadah, his trust should be only on the fadhl of Allah Ta'ala. The obstacle blocking the path to Divine Proximity is the Saalik's reliance on his deeds.

Your qurb with Him is that you perceive His qurb (proximity), otherwise where are you and where is His qurb?

All attributes of excellence and perfection in reality belong exclusively to Allah Ta'ala. Such attributes apply figuratively to the bandah. It is Allah Ta'ala Who in reality has qurb with the bandah. The Qur'aan says: "When My servant asks you about Me, then (know that) verily, I am near (to him)."

The meaning of the bandah's qurb with Allah Ta'ala, is that he perceives with his spiritual eyes Allah's qurb (i.e. the closeness of Allah Ta'ala with him). The effect of such mushaahadah will be that the bandah will observe,

every moment, the respects of the Divine Court. He will be firm on the Shariah.

Divine Qurb does not mean physical nearness which is a characteristic of material objects. Similarly, is does not mean Qurb-e-Haqeeqi whose nature and reality are known to only Allah Ta'ala. The bandah cannot aspire to gain Qurb-e-Haqeeqi because this is an attribute exclusive with Allah Ta'ala.

Be connected to the attributes of His Ruboobiyat (Divinity) and remain predicated to your attributes of uboodiyat (serfdom).

The attributes of Ruboobiyat (i.e. being the Rabb) are the perfect and excellent attributes of Allah Ta'ala, e.g. power, splendour, knowledge, wisdom, etc. The attributes of uboodiyat (being a slave of Allah) are, for example, poverty, weakness, disgrace, ignorance, dependence, etc.

Entire creation along with its being and attributes is the impression of Allah's Sifaat (attributes). Wujood-e-Haqeeqi (True Existence) is the attribute of only Allah Ta'ala. The existence of all other objects is secondary and is the result of Divine Bestowal, e.g. sunlight in reality is the attribute of the sun. The brightness on the wall produced by the sun will figuratively belong to the wall. Thus, truly speaking no object has any inherent quality. There is only a connection with Sifaat-e-Haqeeqiyah (The True Attributes, i.e. the Attributes of Allah Ta'ala), in that all objects are the impressions of the Divine Attributes. But man is oblivious of this reality, thinking that the attributes belong to him. He, therefore, thinks: 'I have existence. I am an }lim. I am wealthy. I am honourable.' Little does he understand that only Allah exists. Only he has knowledge. Only He has treasure. Only He has honour.

The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh), admonishing the Mu'min, tells him to keep in mind the connection which he should have with the Divine Attributes. He should banish ignorance, which means abandonment of the personal attributes to which he lays claim. His existence and attributes are merely the impressions of the Divine Attributes. All man's attributes are subservient to the Divine Attributes and have no independent existence. The

Mu'min should engender in him the attributes of uboodiyat (servitude, subjection). He should view his contemptibility in relation to the true honour of Allah Ta'ala, and compare the *ghina* (sufficiency, wealthiness) of Allah with his own faqr (insufficiency, poverty). He should perceive and recognise his own weakness in relation to Allah's power, and understand his own ignorance by contemplating True Knowledge, i.e. the Divine Attribute of Knowledge.

It is unlawful for you to claim something which belongs to someone else. How can you render lawful the claim of your attributes while He is the Rabb on entire creation?

This statement is presented as proof for the earlier assertion. It is improper and unlawful to claim something which belongs to another person even though in reality, that person is not the true owner of that object because only Allah Ta'ala owns everything. When it is improper for man to claim ownership of even the property of a person who, in fact, is not even the actual owner (Allah alone being the owner), then how can it be permissible for him to lay claim to the attributes of Ruboobiyat (Divinity or godhood) such as honour, dignity, power, knowledge, etc.? Allah is the Rabb of the entire universe and the attributes of Ruboobiyat belong exclusively to Him. It, therefore, behoves the Mu'min to confine himself to the limits by understanding that all attributes of excellence belong to Allah alone. He should never attempt to even substantiate his own existence so that he remains free from all vestiges of shirk. Thus, will Imaan remain pure.

Be firm in your attributes of uboodiyat and He will aid you with His attributes. Be firm in your contemptibility and He will aid you with His honour. Be firm in your weakness and He will aid you with His power.

In the previous naseehat was the exhortation to free yourself from all your attributes because the nafs has a very strong relationship with its imagined attributes of excellence. It is proud of its honour, strength, power, etc. It remains entrapped in this imagination, deriving pleasure from vain and false hopes. It dreads the very thought of abandoning these baseless desires. Abandonment of desires is like suicide to the nafs. The Mu'min is, therefore,

reminded of Divine Aid which he will gain when he renounces vain and false desires.

When the bandah is firm in his condition of uboodiyat, Allah Ta'ala will not abandon him. Prior to the abandonment of desires, the bandah would seek aid from his imagined attributes. In most cases he was unsuccessful. However, after freeing himself from his imagined excellences, Allah Ta'ala aids him with His attributes of reality.

It is only the mushaahadah of the perfect Divine Attributes which can extricate you from the attributes of your nafs.

The attributes of the nafs in this context refer to qualities of excellence which the nafs imagines in itself, e.g. the attribute of greatness, independence, power, knowledge. In fact, the nafs will even regard itself to have independent existence. These are all imaginary ideas of the nafs. As long as man dwells in such fantasy, he will not reach Allah Ta'ala.

The expulsion of these nafsaani attributes cannot be achieved by means of mujaahadah. It is only when Allah Ta'ala directs the illumination of His attributes to the bandah and the nafs then perceives the True Divine attributes, that the imagined attributes of the nafs are displaced. Man has the awareness of the splendour and greatness of Allah Ta'ala. However, this knowledge is not sufficient to displace his pride. Only when the reflection of Allah's attribute of Kibriyaa'i (greatness) falls on him and he vividly perceives it, will his imagined greatness be eliminated. Similarly is it with all his other imagined attributes.

Thus, only after mushaahadah of Allah's perfect attributes does the bandah achieve nearness and communion with Allah Ta'ala.

The lowly material world can contain your physical body, but it cannot contain your spiritual being.

Man consists of body and soul. While the physical body belongs to this material world, the soul is a spiritual substance belonging to the unseen celestial realm. But, the rooh (soul) has a relationship with its physical body.

The physical body, for its subsistence, depends on physical provisions, e.g. food, water, etc. On the other hand, the soul being a spiritual substance does not subsist on material nourishment. Its nourishment is thikr and taa'at (obedience to Allah Ta'ala).

Thus, the material world can sustain man's physical body, but not his spiritual being. There is no affinity between the rooh and the physical world which is a prison for the soul. Therefore, if man fully engrosses himself in this perishable abode, the rooh will initially become terrified and its strength will gradually dissipate. If the effort is only on developing the physical body and the rooh is neglected, it (the rooh) will be rendered impotent.

It is, therefore, necessary that man takes from this material world only sufficient to sustain his body. He should not involve himself in elaborate schemes for the sake of the physical body. Allah Ta'ala, Himself has assumed the responsibility of providing for man. Man should, therefore, apply his undivided attention to the nourishment and development of his rooh and eliminate the pollution which has settled on the rooh as a result of its relationship with the material body. He is to cleanse his rooh from this pollution by means of thikr, taa'at and mujaahdah. In this way will he gain complete freedom from the physical body and be vouchsafed the everlasting life.

> **The affirmation of khusoosiyat (speciality) does not mean the non-existence of human attributes. Khusoosiyat resembles the light of the day which appears on the horizon. Similarly, the rays of His attributes sometimes shine on the darkness of your existence and sometimes this (illumination) is restrained from you. You are then returned to your original qualities. Thus, the illumination is not inherent in you, but, settles over you from Allah Subhaanahu Wa Ta'ala.**

The attributes of the Auliya are of several kinds. Some attributes are necessary for them, e.g. being devoid of disgraceful characteristics such as pride, malice, vanity, etc., and being adorned with lofty qualities such as

dependence on Allah, humility, sincerity, constancy in thikr, etc. These attributes are with them every moment. Some attributes are the natural human qualities, such as weakness and to be affected by an episode of grief, for example.

When Divine Attributes (of Allah Ta'ala) radiate on the Auliya, all other human attributes are overwhelmed. The Auliya then demonstrate such wonderful feats which are beyond the ability of others, e.g. when the Divine Attribute of knowledge radiates on them, they proclaim such wonderful knowledge which leaves other Ulama dumbstruck.

When there is no radiation (tajalli) of Divine Attributes, the human qualities are conspicuous. The episodes of the Auliya bear testimony to this fact. Sometimes they elaborate on issues of great intricacy, while sometimes they are unaware of even common everyday matters.

The term Khusoosiyat (speciality) here refers to the wonderful impressions (of the Divine Attributes) which are occasionally manifested. The existence of the special attributes does not mean that the human attributes of the Auliya have become non-existent. Human attributes are common to all people, even the illustrious Auliya. The temporary assertion of the Divine Attributes does not eliminate the human attributes. This resembles the sunlight which spreads in the entire horizon. All creation becomes visible and the impression is conveyed that the light is the inherent quality of all objects which have become visible, but in reality this is not so. The rays of Allah's attributes similarly illuminate the darkness of the material existence of the Auliya. At that time special impressions become manifest.

When the rays of Divine Illumination are withheld, the human attributes of the Auliya become manifest. All human weakness are the again discernible in them. Thus, the radiation of this noor is not inherent in them nor does it form an integral part of their being. They have no control over it and cannot acquire it by choice.

Some people labour under the misconception that Divine Proximity is achieved only when all human attributes are eradicated and the attributes of

Ruboobiyat (Divinity) become entrenched in the bandah. This idea is utterly baseless and deceptive. Many people are involved in shirk on account of this misconception. As a result of this fallacy they believe the Auliya to be partners with Allah Ta'ala in His exclusive attributes. Nauthubillah! Rasulullah (ﷺ) too was not aware of certain things, e.g. the episode of Ifq (when Sayyidina Aishah –radhiyallahu anha – was maliciously slandered). As a result of extreme hunger he would tie stones on his blessed stomach. At other times he would feed thousands, inform people of far-away happenings and reveal the knowledge of former and later times.

THE TWENTY SIXTH CHAPTER ON ALLAH'S PROXIMITY TO CREATION

Entire creation is darkness. Divine Manifestation has brightened it. Whoever saw creation without perceiving Allah Ta'ala in it (creation) or near it or before it or after it has failed to discern the existence of anwaar which become concealed in the clouds of the impressions of the Sun of Ma-aarif.

Existence is noor while non-existence is darkness. Entire creation with regard to its being (Zaat) is pure non-existence. Man or any other item of creation has no existence of its own. The manifestation of Allah's attributes bestowed existence and brightness to the universe. Creation is for this reason illuminated with the radiance of existence. This is what makes it visible. Thus, in reality, there is only one existence, viz. the existence of Allah Ta'ala.

There are various kinds of mushaahadah of the people of baseerat (spiritual insight) whose gaze is fixed on reality. Some of these Auliya, when their gaze falls on creation, perceive the Creator first. As a result of Divine Illumination, creation receded into oblivion. After having made mushaahadah of the Creator, they perceive the creation. For others, creation is presented as a mirror for the beauty and grandeur of the Creator. Thus, they perceive Allah in or with creation. Those whose gaze is only on creation, not perceiving the Creator in any way, are completely deprived of the noor of ma'rifat. The mysteries of ma'rifat which are like the sun's light are concealed in the clouds of physical creation. They are, therefore, deprived of this treasure.

The true reality of mushaahadah and its elucidation are not rational concepts, but are comprehended by intuition and inspiration.

When Allah Ta'ala deprives you of His mushaahadah with something which does not exist with him, it is a clear sign of His Wrath and Chastisement.

Earlier it was mentioned that true existence belongs only to Allah Ta'ala Who has no partner. A concept which posits true existence for any being

other than Allah Ta'ala is shirk in the Divine Attribute of Existence (Wujood). An object will be concealed from another object if there is a third object intervening, e.g. the sun will be concealed from our gaze by intervening clouds.

Here the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) mentions the wonderful qudrat (power) of Allah Ta'ala. A conspicuous proof of His Wrath is that he prevents people from seeing Him by veiling Himself with objects which are devoid of true existence. These objects are the material items of creation. People fix their gaze on these material objects and cannot look beyond. While they see things which lack true existence, their gaze fails to discern the One Who truly exists. When there is no intervening obstacle, then rationally one should be able to perceive the True Existence since the material obstacle is devoid of true existence. But, by virtue of Allah's qudrat, He has prevented people from perceiving Him even though there is, in reality, no intervening object.

In the ensuing statements, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) presents several arguments for the contention that creation cannot rationally be a screen for the Divine Zaat (Being).

How is it conceivable for anything to screen off mushaahadah of Him when He has manifested everything from the darkness of pure non-existence?

When Allah Ta'ala has bestowed the light of existence to everything after extracting it from the darkness of non-existence, how could it be conceivable for such objects to prevent His mushaahadah?

How is it conceivable for anything to be a veil for His mushaahadah when He is with everything?

When all objects of creation point to His existence, how can they constitute veils concealing Him? They reveal Him. They do not conceal Him.

How is it conceivable for anything to conceal Him when His Manifestation is conspicuous in everything?

All objects of creation are the aathaar (impressions) of the lofty attributes and names of Allah Ta'ala. His attributes shine out in every object of creation. Living objects manifest His attributes of life (creation). He is Muhyi (Creator of life). Dead objects manifest His attribute of causing death. He is Mumeet (Taker of life). His attribute of knowledge shines in the }lim while His Name of dignity is manifest in people of honour and respect. Thus, everything is a manifestation of some Divine Attribute. Nothing can, therefore, conceal Him.

How is it conceivable for anything to conceal Him when His illumination is manifest to everything?

The illumination (tajalli) of Allah Ta'ala is on every object. All things have knowledge of Him in proportion to the degree of Divine Illumination on them. Hence all things glorify Him and submit to Him although we are not able to understand. Every object is a substratum for Divine Illumination, how is it possible for it to conceal Him?

How is it conceivable for anything to conceal Him when He preceded the existence of all things in existence and conspicuousness?

Zuhoor (Manifestation – to be conspicuous) is His eternal attribute which existed before the existence of creation. The manifestation of creation, is in fact, the shadow of His attribute of Zuhoor. Nothing in creation can, therefore, conceal Him.

How is it conceivable for anything to conceal Him when He is the most conspicuous?

Earlier it was mentioned that creation, in reality is non-existent and only Allah Ta'ala has true existence. Wujood (existence) being more conspicuous than adm (non-existence) is self-evident. Thus, the Zuhoor of Allah Ta'ala is greater than the Zuhoor of creation. On account of the intensity of Divine Conspicuousness, the aql (intelligence) fails to comprehend Him just as the eye cannot stare at the sun. The mole which cannot see the sun's light

because of visual incapacity cannot say that the sun is inconspicuous. Nothing can, therefore conceal Him.

How is it conceivable for anything to conceal Him when, in relation to other things, He is closer to you.

Allah Ta'ala says in the Qur'aan Majeed:
"We are closer to man than (his) jugular vein."

When Allah Ta'ala is closer to man than even his own life, nothing can conceal Him from man. It is only our own existence which has become a veil.

How is it conceivable for anything to be a veil concealing Him when our existence is dependent on His Existence. If He had not existed, creation would not have existed.

Since every existence is entirely dependent on Allah's existence, nothing can constitute a veil to conceal Him from man.

O People! It is amazing how Wujood (existence) came into existence from adm (non-existence). It is amazing how the temporal co-exists with the Eternal.

When only Allah's Zaat (Being) has true existence and everything else is baseless and pure non-existence, it is truly amazing that wujood came in adm because wujood and adm are opposites. It is also wonderful that the temporal (i.e. created objects) can co-exist with the Eternal (i.e. Allah Ta'ala). The Eternal is True and Real and the temporal is false and unreal. Thus, the Qur'aan says:
"Everything will be destroyed, except His Face."

Allah Ta'ala is not behind a veil. Only you have been prevented from perceiving Him because of your nafsaani attributes. If He had to be behind a veil, it would have encircled and engulfed Him. But, He encompasses everything, hence He predominates. Thus, there can be nothing to conceal Him.

Allah Ta'ala is conspicuous – His Being as well as His Attributes. His beauty and grandeur shine out in everything and in every place. He is not in any kind of veil. The veil is from the side of people whose spiritual insight is impeded by the veil of nafsaani attributes.

If you desire to perceive His beauty and grandeur, then lift this veil of nafsaaniyat by means of mujaahadah, a'maal-e-saalihah, thikr and obedience to a kaamil Shaikh. When this has been achieved, you will see nothing other than Allah.

How is it possible for any veil to conceal Him when He encompasses all things?

By virtue of the noor of Aql (intelligence and Ilmul Yaqeen you are able to perceive proximity (Qurb) of Allah Ta'ala. The noor of Ilm (knowledge) and Ainul Yaqeen display to you your non-existence in relation to His existence. The noor of Haqq and Haqqul Yaqeen cause you to perceive only His existence, neither your existence nor your non-existence.

When the Saalik engrosses himself in the quest for Allah Ta'ala, executing all acts of obedience, Thikr-e-Lisaani (verbal thikr) and Thikr-e-Qalbi (thikr with the heart) according to the instruction of a Shaikh-e-Kaamil, then Allah Ta'ala by His special grace expands his heart imbuing it with a noor. This noor is called Noor-e-Aql and Ilmul Yaqeen. By virtue of this noor, the Saalik makes mushaahadah of Qurb-e-Ilaahi (Divine Proximity). Spiritually the Saalik perceives that he is close to Allah Ta'ala every moment of his life. The effect of this perception is the disappearance of rebellion from the nafs. The domination of Akhlaaq-e-Zameemah (evil qualities) and contamination are broken. Haya (shame) will become dominant. The Saalik will abstain from prohibitions and be ever prepared for submitting to the commands of Allah Ta'ala.

When this condition becomes entrenched, Allah Ta'ala bestows another noor to the heart, which is called Noor-e-Ilm and also Ainul Yaqeen. By virtue of this noor the Saalik sees everything besides Allah to be non-

existent. He regards himself and all things to be absolute nothing. After having achieved the first noor, the Saalik perceived himself to be in the presence of Allah Ta'ala, which means that the Saalik recognises his own existence. After acquisition of the second noor, the existence of all creation passes into oblivion. Only the existence of Allah Ta'ala is in view.

The effects of this mushaahadah will be total reliance on only Allah Ta'ala. The Saalik will have absolutely no trust and reliance on anything in creation, and his gaze will remain diverted from all things besides Allah Ta'ala. On reaching this maqaam (stage), the Saalik acquires the attributes of tafweez (assigning everything to Allah Ta'ala), tawakkul (trust), radha bar qadha (contentment with Divine Decrees) and tasleem (submission).

Thereafter, comes a third noor in the heart. It is called Noor-e-Haqq as well as Haqqul Yaqeen. With this noor the Saalik perceives only the Zaat (Being) of Allah. Neither is the existence nor the non-existence of the universe in view. The Saalik already perceived the non-existence of all things with the second noor. This leads to the condition in which the Saalik still considers his ego even though it pertains to his non-existence. He has not yet attained complete Fanaa (Annihilation). The awareness of one's existence and non-existence also constitutes a veil.

The meaning of Fanaa-e-Kaamil (Perfect Annihilation) is to be in the state of Fanaa without even being aware thereof. This lofty state of Divine Absorption is achieved after the Saalik has been endowed with the third noor. Higher than this stage is the rank of Baqaa. In the stage of Baqaa, the Saalik is returned to creation. His attention is again brought to focus on creation. A brief explanation of this stage was given earlier.

Allah Ta'ala existed from always and nothing co-existed with Him. He is everlasting.

Since Allah Ta'ala is eternal, He existed always. Just as He was unique in His existence prior to the appearance of creation, so too is He after the appearance of creation. No one is associated in His attribute of existence. The Saalik who has attained Fanaa-e-Kaamil (Perfect Annihilation), sees nothing with him besides Allah Ta'ala.

This state of the Saalik, which he has achieved after attainment of Fanaa-e-Kaamil does not imply that this attribute has now been confirmed for Allah Ta'ala. The Saalik now perceives the unique existence of Allah Ta'ala because formerly he was behind a veil, hence he would perceive other entities along with Allah's existence. Now after lifting of the veil, his spiritual comprehension (idraak) has been rectified enabling him to observe the one and unique existence of Allah Ta'ala.

It is very surprising to observe that you are fleeing from Him, from Whom you cannot separate yourself in any way and you search for that with which you will not be able to live. Truly, the eyes are not blind, but the hearts are blind.

Man is inseparable from his True Master, Allah Ta'ala. Inspite of this, he seeks to flee. This is most surprising. His submission to his nafs is in fact his attempt to flee from Allah Ta'ala. Man thus abandons the righteousness which brings him closer to Allah Ta'ala. On the other hand, man desires and pursues the world which will perish.

This attitude of man is gross stupidity which is the result of spiritual blindness. While they see with their physical eyes, the spiritual vision of their hearts is blinded.

The ubbaad (worshippers) and the zuhhaad (those who have renounced the world) are veiled off from Allah Ta'ala. They detest and fear everything. If they could only see Allah's manifestation in all things, they would not find all things detestable.

The ubbaad are those who are always engaged in righteous deeds. They consider a'maal-e-saalihah to be the medium of Qurb (Divine Proximity) as they are unaware of the way of Divine Law and Ma'rifat. The zuhhaad are those persons who have renounced the world and all its pleasures. They regard their renunciation to be the medium of Divine Proximity.

The people of Divine Love and knowledge have no reliance on their righteous deeds nor do they consider abandonment of a lawful desire to be the medium for the acquisition of the Goal. The }bideen and Zaahideen detest association with people and they shun even lawful pleasures because they believe these to be impediments in attaining the Goal, i.e. Divine Proximity. However, the gaze of the }rif is only on Allah Ta'ala. He is not concerned with anything's existence or non-existence. Besides the Divine Zaat, he perceives nothing else. He sees the manifestation of Allah's Sifaat (attributes) in everything. Hence, from this angle, the }rif has neither detestation nor fear for anyone or anything. At the same time he has no love for anything. *(The comparison here is between two highly elevated groups, viz. Ubbaad/ Zuhhaad and }rifeen. The exposition presented here should not be misunderstood. It should not be inferred from what the Shaikh (the honourable author) says, that the way and attitude of the Ubbaad/Zuhhaad are erroneous. In his exposition, the Shaikh has merely presented the superior course of the two courses of these two highly placed groups of Auliya. The }rif has acquired a higher pinnacle of Divine perception than the Aabid/Zaahid who is yet engaged in the process of Mujaahadah. The Shaikh is not in any way denouncing the attitude and way of the Ubbaad/Zuhhaad. The Path of the Sunnah initiates with Mujaahadah, abandonment of desires, solitude, firmness in ibaadat and abstention from evil. These activities are, undoubtedly, the media for Divine Qurb. However, since the }rif has already traversed the stages of the Aabid/Zaahid, the force irresistibly drawing him higher and higher in the Realm of Qurb-e-Ilaahi is the special Ma'rifat bestowed to him by Allah Ta'ala, hence the superiority if the }rif's way. But no man can attain the stage of Special Ma'rifat without having traversed the difficult valleys of ibaadat and zuhd, unless Allah Ta'ala so desires, as is the case of the Majzubs – Translator.)*

This attitude of the }rif should not be misconstrued. It does not mean that he is absolutely devoid of the attribute of love, affection, fear and detestation. It is not possible to eradicate in entirety the natural attributes of man. However, all the attributes of the }rif are for the sake of Allah and from Allah. The nafs has absolutely no influence in the attributes of the }rif. On the other hand, the ubbaad and the zuhhaad will have love and affection for a good act or a saintly man because they see in it benefit for their nafs and because they consider it a medium for Qurb. Similarly, they will detest and

fear something or someone because they discern harm for themselves therein and because they believe it to be a cause for distancing themselves from Allah Ta'ala.

The }rif has no consideration for his nafs. All motives and relationships are negated. Nothing besides Allah Ta'ala exists for him. The nafs has no share in anything the }rif does. The condition of the }rifeen is described in the following Hadith:

> "Whoever loves for the sake of Allah, detests for the sake of Allah, gives for the sake of Allah and withholds for the sake of Allah, verily he has perfected his Imaan."

Thus, the }bid and Zaahid lacking in ma'rifat are still trapped in their nafs. Everything, therefore, is a hijaab (veil) for them, hence they detest and fear these objects.

> **The existence of such an existence which truly exists with Allah Ta'ala does not constitute a veil for you. But, imaginary existence have veiled you from Allah Ta'ala.**

A real existent does not veil a person from Allah nor does it deprive him of Divine Perception. People who are deprived of Divine Proximity, dwelling behind the veil of unmindfulness (ghaflat) and failing to see beyond material creation, have been cast into deprivation by things which they imagine to exist. Believing non-existents to exist, they lapse into ghaflat and are deprived of Allah's mushaahadah.

Since the }rif's gaze is only on the Divine Zaat and on the aathaar (impressions) of the Divine Attributes, he regards the whole universe as the shadow of Allah's Sifaat. Thus, this universe does not constitute a veil for his spiritual vision just as the reflection or shadow of trees in the water does not impede the motion of the boat. However, if the pilot is overwhelmed by his imagination and he believes the shadows to be trees, he will bring the boat to a halt. He will not advance. In his imagination the trees have become obstacles impeding the boat's movement.

The person whose imagination constitutes a veil can also be likened to a man who hears the roaring of the wind outside his home. He imagines it to be the roaring of a lion and remains indoors fearing the lion which he has imagined. This person is prevented from emerging, not by any real existent, but by his imagination which is baseless, having no real existence.

If it was not for the illumination of His Manifestation, the universe would not have been visible. If His lofty attributes of excellence had to become manifest, entire creation would have been annihilated into nothingness.

This subject has been discussed several times. The entire universe by itself is in fact, non-existent. The only existent is the One, True Existent, Allah Ta'ala. This very same subject is here presented in another style.

The universe which you behold is, in fact, the reflection of the True Existent. If it was not for the Divine Illumination and reflection, this universe would not have existed.

If the Divine Attributes had to radiate on the universe without intervening veils, entire creation would perish. It cannever bear the direct radiation of the r, it was ?Divine Attributes. When the Divine Tajalli appeared on Mount T reduced to bits and Musaa (alayhis salaam) fell unconscious.

Since He is the Hidden One, He has revealed everything else and since He is the Manifest, He has wrapped up the existence of everything else.

Zaahir and Baatin are among the attributive Names of Allah Ta'ala. Just as Allah Ta'ala has no partner in His Zaat, so too has He no partners in His Sifaat. Thus, the Divine Attribute of Baatin (The One Who is hidden) dictates that none be associated in His quality of being concealed. He has, therefore, made everything conspicuous. Similarly, His attribute of Zaahir (The One Who is manifest) demands that there be no partner with Him in His quality of being conspicuous. Thus, He has placed everything in concealment. Everything's existence has, therefore, been wrapped up by Him. Nothing is associated with Him in true existence (Wujood-e-Haqiqi).

Only His Zaat is truly manifest and truly hidden. The manifestation and concealment of all creation are secondary, allegorical and shadow-like.

He has commanded you to contemplate on His creation in this worldly abode. Soon will the Perfect Being become manifest for you in the abode of the Hereafter.

Allah Ta'ala has ordered His servants to reflect and ponder in His creation so that they acknowledge His Being and understand His attributes of knowledge, power and wisdom. After meditation when belief has become grounded, the bandah will gain the ability of perceiving the manifestation of the Divine Attributes in Allah's created objects. After contemplating and meditating on the Sifaat, he will perceive the Divine Zaat with his spiritual vision.

In this earthly abode the bandah is able to make only mushaahadah of the Divine Illumination with the eyes of the heart. Soon, i.e. in the }khirah, the Perfect Zaat will become manifest. However, the vision of Allah's Zaat with the physical eyes in the }khirah will be in proportion to the spiritual vision of man here on earth. The greater the mushaahadah with the baatini eyes here on earth, the greater will be man's physical vision of Allah in the }khirah.

Allah Ta'ala is aware that you are unable to restrain yourself without His mushaahadah, hence He made you perceive His creation.

The true Mu'mineen have an intense love for Allah Ta'ala. In the Qur'aan, Allah Ta'ala says:

"Those who believe are intense in love for Allah."

Allah Ta'ala is the True Love and everyone loves Him. The lover can have no rest without seeing his Beloved. However, the vision of Allah in this world is difficult without intervening veils because our lowly physical existence cannot bear the sight of the Divine Being.

Allah Ta'ala was well aware that His lovers would be restless because of their inability to see Him. He, therefore, displayed the illumination of His Zaat

and Sifaat from behind the veils of His creation to enable the Mu'min to see Him according to the degree of his spiritual vision. Every Mu'min enjoys a degree of this mushaahadah. Thus, belief in the Divine Being is common to all Mu'mineen. This i'tiqaad (belief) is also a kind of mushaahadah.

The fadhl of Allah focuses more on some Mu'mineen, hence they have greater spiritual perception of Allah Ta'ala. The degree of their spiritual yaqeen is similar to physical vision for which there is no need to adduce any proof. The Lovers of Allah derive contentment from this mushaahadah. If this spiritual mushaahadah was not vouchsafed for them, they would have become destroyed and annihilated.

In the }khirah they will be blessed with the great fortune of beholding Allah Ta'ala with their physical eyes.

As long as you do not perceive the Creator in His creation, you will remain subservient to it (creation), and when you perceive Him, then creation will be subservient to you.

As long as man in unable to recognise the Zaat and Sifaat of Allah Ta'ala in creation and the gaze of his heart remains confined to creation, he will remain subservient to creation. Those engrossed in wealth, children and land will remain entrapped in these worldly pursuits. They will be the worshippers of materialism. Those pursuing fame will be subservient to this pursuit. In short, if the pursuit is not Allah Ta'ala, man will remain the slave of whatever he is pursuing.

When man recognises that creation is the substratum for the manifestation of Allah's illumination and all things besides Allah are banished from his mind, then entire creation becomes subservient to this bandah who then gains independence from creation.

When creation becomes subservient to man, his love permeates the hearts of others. They all love him while there is no room in his heart for anyone's love. He remains aloof from everyone and everything besides Allah Ta'ala.

He has made lawful for you to contemplate His Beauty in creation. You are not allowed to restrict yourself to the mushaahadah of the thawaat (plural of Zaat – beings) of created objects. Thus, Allah Ta'ala commands:
('O Muhammad!) Say: Look at the things which are in the heavens.'
In this, the door of your understanding has been opened up. It is not said: 'Look at the heavens', because it would only serve the purpose of seeing the presence of the heavens.

Allah Ta'ala has instructed man to recognise the beauties and splendour of Allah's Sifaat by meditating on His creation. Entire creation is in reality the reflection of the principles and particulars of the beauties and splendours of His lofty attributes of Jalaal (splendour) and Jamaal (beauty). Man has not been instructed to confine his gaze to only the mere presence of the physical objects. Viewing only the beings (thawaat) of created objects constitutes a veil for the mushaahadah of Allah Ta'ala. Thus, it is seen that people who restrict their gaze to the scenery are dwelling in ghaflat. They are deprived of the mushaahadah of Allah Ta'ala.

The proof for the need to look beyond the mere presence of objects is Allah's statement:

"Say (O Muhammad!): Look at the things which are in the heavens."

The command is to meditate on the Sifaat of Allah Ta'ala, which are displayed in the created objects present in the heavenly realms. The order is not simply to view the heavens.

The contemplative study of the things in the heavens opens up a wonderful vista of understanding. You have, in fact, been informed that the purpose of looking at the things in the heavens is not the mushaahadah of these created objects. The purpose is the mushaahadah of Khaaliq (The Creator). If the aim was the mushaahadah of these things, the instruction would simply have been to view the existence of the physical objects. This would not lead to the Creator of the physical objects.

The material objects are in reality non-existent because they have no independent existence. They are the veils of Allah Ta'ala. The purpose of looking at them is to find a way towards the Creator.

The existence of creation is with His command – "Koen!" ("Be!"). In the presence of His Unity, entire creation is annihilated and non-existent.

By itself, creation has no existence. Its existence is like a shadow and a reflection. It gained its existence by the Divine Command: "Be!"

If the gaze is directed to His Unity and uniqueness without looking for His manifestation in the worldly objects, then creation is absolutely annihilated. This concept should not be misconstrued. It should not be inferred that creation is Allah or creation is God-incarnate – Nauthubillah! The Creator remains the Creator and creation remains creation. There is no fusion between the Creator and creation. When a person is not endowed with spiritual insight, he is unable to comprehend transcendental and spiritual realities and states simply on the basis of customary knowledge and the employment of intelligence. When Allah Ta'ala graces a man with spiritual vision, these mysteries become clear.

A person who has acquired the ma'rifat of Allah, has perceived Allah in everything. Whoever has acquired the stage of Fanaa, has disappeared from all things. Whoever has made Him the Beloved, has not chosen anyone else.

Here, the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) discusses ma'rifat, fanaa and muhabbat (love). The signs of the person who has acquired these three stages are explained. The three stages are mentioned in order of priority. Ma'rifat occupies the highest stage. The next stage is fanaa and the third is muhabbat.

When by virtuous deeds a man is made a perfect }rif, then there is nothing in creation which can prevent him from making mushaahadah of his Rabb in the way the general public is prevented. He does not regard everything to be non-existing as does one who is in the stage of Fanaa and has not yet reached the stage of Baqaa. Since the }rif is annihilated from all things and perpetuated with Allah Ta'ala and His Sifaat, he (the }rif) sees

everything. Entire creation is, in fact, the aathaar (impressions) of the Divine Attributes. However, the }rif's gaze on created objects is not stationary on these things as is the gaze of the people in general. He perceives Allah's attributes in every item of creation.

The one in the stage of Fanaa does not see anything since he has disappeared from all and everything, so much so, that he becomes oblivious of his own existence. On earth if a person is in love with someone, the beloved is constantly in his mind and heart. Inspite of others being in his presence, he remains detached from them and sometimes is not even aware of their presence.

When a man who has as yet not attained the stage of Fanaa loves Allah, then although he does consider the existence of other things too, he will not give preference to these things over Allah Ta'ala. He will accord priority to the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala and crush his own desires.

> It is only extreme proximity which has screened. On account of His extreme manifestation has he become veiled, and by virtue of the splendour of His Noor has He become hidden from the eyes.

Here the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) states three reasons for Allah's Zaat being incomprehensible to man's understanding. First is the intensity of His qurb (proximity). It has already been explained earlier it is only Allah Ta'ala Who has Qurb-e-Haqeeqi (True Proximity) with creation. The nature of this proximity is such that Allah Ta'ala is closer to everything than even their own being. The full comprehension of an object is possible when proximity to and distance from an observer are at the correct degree. If an object is at a great distance, visibility is reduced and it becomes invisible when the distance is excessive. Similarly, an object placed against the eyes cannot be properly seen. The same rule applies to spiritual vision and comprehension (idraak).

Now since Allah Ta'ala is closer to the bandah than his own being, neither his physical faculty of vision nor his spiritual faculty of vision can comprehend Him. No one, therefore, can comprehend Him. Whatever is

comprehended of Allah Ta'ala by His elite servants (the Auliya) is infinitesimal because Allah Ta'ala is extremely close to man.

Thus, extreme proximity constitutes a veil. This is one reason for man's inability to comprehend Allah Ta'ala. Another reason is that Allah is more conspicuous than everything else. As a result of intense manifestation, He is beyond the comprehension of the physical and spiritual eyes. The gaze of man is unable to stare even at the sun by virtue of the intensity of its illumination although the sun is a lowly creature of Allah Ta'ala. What then can be imagined of the Noor of the Khaaliq? It is a limitless manifestation. The Mushaahadah, Qurb and Wusool which the Sufiyaa experience are simply the yaqeen of His Being and of their perception of closeness to Him. Total comprehension (idraak) of the Divine Zaat is an impossibility.

How is it conceivable for Allah Ta'ala, the Glorious and the Splendid, to be veiled from anything? His illumination is manifest in even the object which constitutes the veil. His existence and presence are conspicuous even in the object which is a veil.

An object cannot be comprehended or perceived on account of two reasons. One – Intensity of proximity and manifestation. This is confirmed for the Zaat of Allah Ta'ala. Two – Distance or to be far away. This does not apply to Allah Ta'ala. Here the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) states that it is not conceivable for Allah Ta'ala to be veiled by anything nor can He be at a distance from anything. Allah's illumination is conspicuous even in an object which is regarded to be a hijaab (veil). He exists, is present and conspicuous, hence nothing can veil Him. Every object is a reflection of His beauty and splendour which are being mirrored.

The wasaawis (stray thoughts) are regarded by the Saalik to be a veil because of the paucity of his baseerat (spiritual insight). If his baseerat is correct, wasaawis will not perturb him nor appear as a veil. Even these stray thoughts are displays of His Qudrat (Power).

Lifting your sight to the endurance of things besides Allah and fearing others are proof that you have not reached Him.

When man desires that a thing remains with him forever, whether it be worldly wealth, property, or spiritual states, kashf and karaamaat, it indicates that he lacks the treasure of Wusool ilaallah (Union with Allah). If he had attained Wusool, his heart would not have hankered after the perpetuation of these things. Similarly, when man fears the loss or reduction of those objects, it is indicative of him lacking Wusool-Ilaallah.

If man acquires the true treasure (Divine Proximity), he will never be concerned by the loss of any other object, e.g. a man possesses a copper coin of insignificant value and a gold coin of considerable value. If he loses the copper coin, but has possession of the gold coin, he will not be perturbed. But, if a man becomes despondent at the loss of a copper coin of insignificant worth, it will be concluded that he does not have gold, hence his concern for the copper. Thus, the Saalik who lays claim to Divine Proximity should examine himself on this standard. If he does not hanker after the perpetuation of things nor does the loss of things affect him, then this state of his heart indicates attainment of proximity to Allah Ta'ala.

Although there are numerous manifestations of comfort and happiness, true and perfect happiness is with Divine Mushaahadah and Qurb, and although there are many manifestations of punishment, true punishment is to be veiled from Him.

Things from which the heart derives comfort and pleasure are in reality the medium for the manifestation of comfort and happiness. Similarly, the objects which cause hurt and grief to the heart, are the medium for the manifestation of punishement. Thus, there are numerous worldly objects of comfort and happiness, e.g. the wife, children, wealth, rank, etc. In the }khirah are Jannat and its wonderful things. However, true happiness will be only if Divine Perception accompanies the use of these object of pleasure.

If Mushaahadah of Allah Ta'ala does not accompany the use of these things, then although one will experience superficial happiness, in reality it will be a punishment even though this is not perceived at the time as a punishment. But soon will one realise the reality. Sometimes this punishment becomes manifest here on earth when these material possessions are lost or

when one is no longer capable of utilising them. Grief then overwhelms a person. He sees no plan of escape from the punishment.

Assuming that he is not overtaken by this punishment during his lifetime, then at the time of death he will be forced to leave everything. At that critical juncture he will experience absolute regret and total punishment.

On the contrary, if Mushaahadah and Qurb of Allah Ta'ala accompany these pleasures and comforts, then even when man is separated from them he is still in possession of the true treasure of Wusool Ilaallah. This, comfort and happiness are perpetual for the Waasil (the Saalik who has attained Divine Proximity).

There are also numerous things of hardship and pain in this world and the Hereafter, e.g. sickness, poverty, starvation, etc., and the various forms of chastisement in the }khirah. True punishment will be when man who experiences these hardships is deprived of Divine Perception. When he is veiled and far from Allah, these difficulties will be absolute punishment. However, when involved in these difficulties, if man experiences the wealth of Mushaahadah and Wusool, then difficulties will not be hardships in reality, even though they have the external form of hardship because the basis of happiness and grief is the heart. The man in whose heart there exists the treasure of Mushaahadah and Wusool will never be prepared to exchange his hardships for the world full of comforts and pleasures if the price he has to pay is the loss of the spiritual treasure he possesses. Thus, true hardship and punishment are to be deprived of Allah's Proximity, and true comfort and happiness are the wealth of Mushaahadah.

Hearts experience pain and grief because they are deprived of Mushaahadah.

All grief, pain and worry which people experience are due to only their deprivation of Allah's Mushaahadah. If they possess the wealth of Mushaahadah, they would never experience grief and worry. Grief and worry are the consequences of the nafs being denied its aims. Therefore, a man who is perpetually in the presence of His Master, having become oblivious of the desires and aims of his nafs, will always be happy. The heart of the }rif is

illumined with the noor of ma'rifat. The world and its pleasures have no worth in his heart, hence he is always in happiness whether he has material possessions or not. His heart is never grief-stricken.

This condition of spiritual happiness is not negatory of natural emotional feelings. It does not mean that the }rif will be without emotion even if near and close ones die or he, himself is overtaken by illness and physical pain. The happiness of the }rif is everlasting while that of the non-}rif is temporary. In reality, the superficial happiness of the non-}rif is grief and pain.

If shunning of you by people and their criticism hurt you, be contented with Allah's awareness of your state. If you are not concerned with His awareness, then this discontent is worse for you than the hurt of the criticism of people.

The criticism and praise of people are neither harmful nor beneficial. Therefore, when the Saalik is pained by the criticism of people or when they shun him, he should be satisfied with Allah's awareness of his condition. He should know that since Allah Ta'ala is aware of his sincerity and since Allah Ta'ala accepts his deeds, the criticism and opposition of people cannot harm him in any way whatever. On the other hand, if he is rejected by Allah Ta'ala, the praises and support of people will not avail him in any way. The Saalik should ingrain this conception in his heart. He will then suffer no grief.

If you, the Saalik, are not contented with this awareness of Allah Ta'ala, but you regard their attention, criticism and ignoring you as failure, hence you experience constant grief, then know that this pain is, in reality, not a hardship. The great calamity in fact, is the abominable stage of your heart, viz. your discontentment and lack of confidence in Allah's Knowledge. You should reflect and endeavour to discover the cause of this deplorable state of your heart. Why are you affected by the praise and criticism of people? It does not behove the Saalik to be concerned and affected with the praise or criticism of people. By Allah Ta'ala, it will be of no benefit.

A man for whom the doors of knowledge and spiritual subtleties have not opened, remains imprisoned within the confines of his nafsaani desires and pleasures.

A man born on earth and becoming entrapped in ghaflat (negligence) is diverted from Allah Ta'ala. In consequence, he is deprived of spiritual knowledge and insight. Such a person dwells within the confines of his lowly desires. He is caught up in his nafsaani pleasures. He remains unaware of the spacious field of Tauhid. He wanders aimlessly in his own existence, in circles, never progressing beyond his starting point. All his efforts are for the sake of his nafs.

Opposed to this slave of the nafs, is the Saalik who has emerged from these lowly confines and is set in progress in the vast spans of Tauhid. He has attained freedom from the narrow limits of nafsaani desires and imaginary ideas. He has acquired a pure, holy and free life. He does not suffer grief as a result of worldly hardships and events. Changing conditions do not overwhelm him. In fact, he dominates. He is sustained by the attributes of Allah Ta'ala. His existence is not coupled to worldly objects. Although he may appear to be affected superficially by worldly circumstances, his heart is as firm as a mountain.

THE TWENTY SEVENTH CHAPTER ON SOME STATES OF THE AARIFEEN

An Aarif is not one who finds Allah Ta'ala closer to himself in relation to his indication when he indicates towards spiritual mysteries. The true Aarif is he who is annihilated in the existence of Allah Ta'ala and absorbed in His Mushaahadah. Thus, he is oblivious of his indication (ishaarah).

Before expounding this topic, it is necessary to present a few facts. Firstly, the bandah who has attained the stage of Fanaa is like a dead body in the hands of a living person. The dead body has neither movement nor rest of its own. It is devoid of any attribute. It is moved about by the will of the living. Similar is the state of the nafs of one who has reached Fanaa. He is completely subservient to the Will of Allah since he does not discern any attribute in himself. He is even oblivious of his own existence. He dwells in only the perception that the One Being is the true enactor of all actions and attributes. The Hadith, "With Me he hears and With Me he sees", adequately describes the state of the Saalik.

Secondly, when a man speaks about an object, three things are present in his mind. Comprehension of the object is related to these three things, viz. the speaker, the discussion, and the object of discussion. All three things are taken into account.

Thirdly is the extreme proximity which Allah Ta'ala has with His servant. It was earlier explained that Allah Ta'ala is closer to man than his ownself. When remembering something, the implication is that there is some distance between the thaakir (the one who remembers) and the mathkoor (the one who is remembered). In addition to distance, is also the presupposition of a difference between the thaakir and the mathkoor. If this was not the case, remembrance (thikr) would have been an impossibility, e.g. Zaid remembers something about himself. There surely must be some difference and distance between Zaid and the object of his remembrance, hence he remembers it.

Thus, when a man remembers Tauhid, it implies that his nafs has not yet been annihilated.

Fourthly, in the terminology of the Sufiyah, Ishaarah (Indication) means to remember (or discuss) the mysteries of Tauhid. At the time of giving a discourse on the mysteries of Tauhid which settle inspirationally in his heart, if the }rif finds Allah Ta'ala closer to himself than his ishaarah, then it is clear that he has not attained any rank in Fanaa. The }rif, when presenting the mysteries of Tauhid should not be like a lecturer who has three different entities in mind (i.e. the three things mentioned above) because the object of Thikr here is Allah Ta'ala Who is closer to the bandah than his own life. Thus, remembering (or speaking), in a way indicates difference and distance (between the Thaakir and Mathkoor). Therefore, if the }rif remembers Allah (or the mysteries of Tauhid) in the same way as other things are recalled, it confirms that he has not attained the stage of Fanaa.

The condition of the }rif should be one of absolute closeness to Allah Ta'ala. True annihilation (Fanaa) is only when there remains absolutely no duality in the }rif's mind. There should be no difference and distance in his mind regarding his discourse of Tauhid and Allah Ta'ala (The Object of his discourse). Even if he experiences Allah Ta'ala closer to him than his ishaarah, he still has not attained complete Fanaa since he does perceive different entities in his state of proximity to Allah Ta'ala.

His state of Fanaa should be absolute absorption and annihilation in the mushaahadah of Allah Ta'ala. Inspite of his discourse on Tauhid he should remain unaware thereof. Although he speaks, he is being manipulated by Another Being. While he is a speaker ostensibly, he in reality speaks by another power. He is like a lifeless man in the power of a living being.

The noble and lofty motive underlying the Aarifeen's uboodiyat to Allah Ta'ala is truth and complete fulfilment of the Rights of Allah Ta'ala.

Besides two things, the }rifeen do not supplicate to Allah Ta'ala for anything. Neither is their motive the bounties of the world nor the pleasures of Jannat. Their very first motive is truth in worshipping Allah Ta'ala. They

desire truth in their attributes of uboodiyat. The following are the attributes of uboodiyat:

Shukr (gratitude) for bounties. Sabr (patience) in adversity. Hubb (love) and bugdh (hatred) should be for only Allah's Sake. Annihilation of one's schemes and plans and contentment with Divine Dispensation; Maintaining the heart's gaze and attention constantly on Allah Ta'ala; The acquisition of humility; dependency on only Him; fearing Him.

Secondly, is their effort to fulfil the huqooq (rights) of Ruboobiyat (Godhood). Along with the physical body being in complete subservience in His worship, the spiritual body (the Rooh) should be perpetually engrossed in His remembrance.

Only these two desires are the motives of the }rifeen whereas other people follow their emotional desires. Some pursue the things of the world, some desire the damsels and mansions of Jannat, some desire waaridat (spiritual inspirations) and karaamaat (miracles), some wish for lofty spiritual stations and some pursue customary knowledge while turning away from the knowledge of reality.

The Aarif is he whose restlessness does not end and he finds no rest in anything besides Allah Ta'ala.

The }rif is fully aware of his nafs and its attributes. The greater his insight and recognition of his nafs, the greater will be his ma'rifat of Allah Ta'ala. In this regard the Hadith says:

"Whoever has recognised his nafs, has recognised his Rabb."

The }rif thus, views his nafs as an embodiment of defect and evil since its aim at every moment is the pleasures of the world. The }rif being fully aware of this corrupt state of the nafs, diverts his attention at all times to Allah Ta'ala. He remains restless and supplicates to Allah Ta'ala to aid him and save him from the evil of the nafs. This attitude becomes an inseparable quality of the }rif.

Since the aim of the }rif is to worship Allah Ta'ala, he cannot find rest in anything besides Allah. His heart cannot find rest in anything besides Allah. His heart finds support with only Allah Ta'ala.

The hearts of the zaahideen become constricted when they are praised because they perceive such praise to be related to creation. However, the Aarifeen become pleased when they are praised because they perceive that the praise is related to the Sovereign of the universe, Allah Ta'ala.

The veil of ghairullah is in the view of the spiritual insight of the Zaahid. He, therefore, flees from every worldly object which he regards to be a veil screening him from Allah Ta'ala. Thus, when someone praises the Zaahid, his heart is grieved because he deems the praise to be the act of the praiser, hence he fears being entrapped in corruption. It should be understood that this idea of the Zaahideen is valid because praise does corrupt a man.

However, since the gaze of the }rif is perpetually on only Allah Ta'ala, he sees everything with the gaze of Haqeeqat (reality and truth). He understands all actions as being the emanation of Allah's Qudrat and His displays of marvel. Thus, when someone praises the }rif, he understands the praise as an emanation of Allah. He, therefore, feels elated. In this state of elation he experiences further spiritual progress. Such praise does not affect the }rif adversely because his nafs has already been annihilated. The pleasures of the world no longer pose attractions for him. The danger of vanity and self-esteem does not exist in relation to the }rif. His pleasure when being praised is purely for the sake of Allah Ta'ala. It is, therefore, not detrimental for him.

In view of the fact that such high-ranking }rifeen devoid of all vestiges of the nafs in entirety, are extremely rare, the Hadith has in general declared praise to be a medium of fitnah (which corrupts the nafs). When a man praised someone in his presence, Rasulullah (ﷺ) said:

"Woe upon you! You have cut the throat of your brother."

THE TWENTY EIGHT CHAPTER ON FIRAASAT (INSIGHT) AND ISTIDLAAL (DEDUCTION)

When you observe a man answering every question, revealing every spiritual experience and dilating every aspect of knowledge, then understand therefrom his ignorance.

A Sufi or Saalik who answers every question posed to him, never proclaiming his unawareness on any aspect, who reveals to every person his spiritual experiences and who narrates every detail of spiritual knowledge is, in fact, an ignoramus. Only a being whose knowledge encompasses everything has the ability of answering every question. But this attribute / ability belongs exclusively to Allah Ta'ala, the Knower of the visible and invisible. Man's knowledge is infinitesimal.

It is also necessary for the }lim to take into account the intellectual capacity of the one who poses questions. He should answer only if he discerns ability of comprehension in the one who asks. If he discerns a lack of ability, he should refrain from answering.

When the Saalik reveals the spiritual mysteries and subtleties which he has acquired, he betrays his ignorance, because asraar (spiritual mysteries) and uloom (spiritual knowledge) are the amaanat (trust) of Allah Ta'ala. Revelation or exposure of this amaanat is abuse of trust (Khiyaanat). In addition, people will not understand these mysteries by explanation as these things are comprehended by only baatini perception. The attempt to explain these asraar will only render them more incomprehensible. Words cannot convey their meanings.

The revelation of certain spiritual knowledge is also detrimental and can lead to strife and mischief. Since the true meaning of such knowledge cannot be expressed, the audience will misconstrue the explanation. In such matters the silence of the Saalik is imperative.

To turn towards Allah Ta'ala in the initial stage of Sulook is the sign of success in the final stage of Sulook.

Just as there is a beginning and an end to every science / craft, so too is there a point of initiation in Sulook for the Saalik as well as a goal. The end or goal is known as Wusool and Mushaahadah. When the Saalik in the initial stage of Sulook reposes his total reliance on Allah Ta'ala in every affair, not depending on his own efforts, thikr, meditation, etc., it indicates that he will achieve success in the final stage of Sulook. His attainment of Divine Proximity will be true Wusool Ilallah. He will be accepted into Divine Acceptance.

If in the beginning the Saalik is deceived by his own efforts, believing that he will attain perfection thereby or he hankers after lofty spiritual stations, he will fail to reach the true goal even though he acquires knowledge of the ultimate goal by virtue of his association with a Shaikh. It is, therefore, imperative that the Saalik seeks Allah's aid in everything. He should at no time consider his efforts of mujaahadah to be significant. His quest should be only Allah Ta'ala. He should not think of his effort as being of any significance or even an act of slight importance. This is a basic principle of Sulook.

If the initial stage of the Saalik's Sulook is illumined with auraad, his final stage of Sulook will be brightened with anwaar and ma-aarif.

In the beginning the Saalik's spiritual affairs are connected with deeds, auraad (stipulated acts of worship) and thikr. These acts are related to his physical body. In the final stage these affairs are transferred from the zaahir (physical body) to the baatin (spiritual body – the Rooh). In other words the heart becomes radiant with anwaar and ma-aarif. His spiritual activity is executed by the heart. The Saalik who spends his time constructively in the beginning, adorning his state with obedience and worship and refraining from futility, his final condition in Sulook will be most successful and fruitful. The sun of anwaar and ma-aarif will rise on him. On the other hand, the one who is indolent and lethargic in the beginning, refraining from steadfastness and regularly observing obedience and ibaadat, his end will be

shaky and weak. The perfection of the final stage is dependent on the perfection of the initial stage.

The obtainal of the pleasure and sweetness of righteous deeds here on earth, is proof of one's acceptance in the Aakhirah.

Although the reward and fruit of ibaadat are in reality obtainable in the }khirah, many servants of Allah acquire reward even here on earth. Such reward is in the form of the heart deriving pleasure and sweetness in acts of righteousness. This is proof of the acceptance of their deeds and the obtainal of thawaab in the }khirah. However, pleasure in ibaadat should not be understood to be the maqsood (goal). The pursuit of pleasure in ibaadat is negatory of ikhlaas (sincerity). Ibaadat should be rendered for the pleasure of Allah Ta'ala irrespective of any pleasure or displeasure to the nafs.

The Saalik should render ibaadat in all states and circumstances. He should not feel that in the }khirah there is no reward for an act of ibaadat the sweetness and pleasure of which he does not experience here on earth. The worldly fruit of ibaadat is merely a sign of its acceptance. It is not the shart (condition) nor cause of acceptance. Often an act devoid of pleasure is more acceptable to Allah Ta'ala than an act from which pleasure and sweetness are acquired.

When you wish to discover your worth by Allah, then look at the occupation in which He has involved you.

The bandah who desires to know if Allah has accepted or rejected him and if he is fortunate or unfortunate, should ponder in his own condition. He should look at the activity in which Allah Ta'ala has applied him. If he is involved in noble acts which he executes for the sake of Allah's pleasure, he should understand that he has been accepted by Allah Ta'ala. He is a man of fortune. If he is involved in disobedience and transgression, then conclude that he stands rejected by Allah Ta'ala. As such, he is most unfortunate.

Inspite of sorrow for lacking in obedience, if one makes no effort in the direction of obedience, it is a sign of being trapped in deception.

Some people grieve much because they lack in obedience and virtues. They even shed tears in profusion. Despite their grief, they do not initiate the process of ibaadat nor do they abstain from sins. Such sorrow is false and the deception of the nafs. True grief and honest regret constrain one to practise virtue and to shun evil.

When Allah Ta'ala keeps you steadfast in a condition and along with this you acquire the benefits (of the goodness rendered), it is a sign that it is Allah Who is sustaining your firmness in this condition.

When Allah Ta'ala grants a bandah firmness in whatever situation he finds himself in, be it a worldly occupation, e.g. trade, farming or employment, or a Deeni state, e.g. Ta'leem, renunciation of the worldly agencies, etc., and the fruits of this state are also experienced, then it is the sign of Allah's pleasure for the state of the bandah – that Allah loves him to remain in this state, provided that his occupation does not interfere with any Deeni duties. Since Allah Ta'ala sees goodness for the bandah in this condition, He keeps him involved therein. The bandah should, therefore, neither wish to be extricated from his occupation nor should he attempt to withdraw therefrom. He should be grateful to Allah Ta'ala and remain in his occupation.

Diligence in acts of Nafl ibaadat accompanied by lethargy in the fulfilment of Waajib acts is a sign of subservience to the desires of the nafs.

Some people while exhibiting considerable enthusiasm for Nafl ibaadat, e.g. wazifas, optional fasting and Nafl Salaat, are lax in the performance of Waajib duties. They are, for example, lax in paying their debts and fulfilling the rights of others. They do not attach importance to Fardh Haj or they fail to pay Zakaat of the past years or they do not seek pardon from people whom they had molested. This attitude is a deception of the nafs. In such circumstances the enthusiasm for optional acts is subservience to base desires of the nafs. The nafs loves fame which is acquired by indulgence in Nafl worship.

Of what benefit will optional acts be when one is loaded with the liability of compulsory duties? Nafl ibaadat is like the profit in trade while Waajibaat and Faraa-idh are like the capital. Thus, the compulsory acts have priority over the optional acts.

The trust of anwaar and ma-aarif hidden in the hearts displays their effects on the external limbs of the body.

A sign of a man of spiritual accomplishment is that the blessings and impressions of the anwaar and ma-aarif hidden in heart become conspicuous on his face, hands and feet.

THE TWENTY NINTH CHAPTER ON WA'Z (LECTURING), NASEEHAT (GOOD COUNSELLING) AND THEIR EFFECTS ON THE HEART

The tasreeh of those who are authorised to reveal transcendental realities (Haqaa-iq and Ma-aarif) is readily comprehended by people. Their ishaarah is clear and evident.

The spiritual mysteries which are inspired by Allah Ta'ala into the hearts of his close servants are secret trusts, the revelation of which is not permissible without Divine Consent, hence the }rifeen do not reveal the Divine Mysteries entrusted to them. However, when Divine Consent is acquired, they reveal certain Divine Secrets to the extent they are permitted.

Those who are granted this permission are such men whose speech is for the sake of Allah. There is no vestige of their nafs associated with their speech. They do not speak of their own ability. They are instruments in the Divine Will. While it superficially appears as if they are speaking, the speech in fact is a Divine Emanation.

The speech of such august personalities consists of two kinds, viz. *Tasreeh* and *Ishaarah.*

Tasreeh is a clear statement devoid of ambiguity. The purpose is stated with clarity, not by means of signs or ambiguous terms. *Ishaarah* is an ambiguous statement, the meaning of which is not clear. The purpose is referred to by means of signs.

The quality of their Tasreeh is such that on hearing it, people readily understand. There is no need for elaboration. The state of Ishaarah is such that it is clear and evident to the audience (even though the meaning may not be fully comprehended).

Since the speech of these }rifeen is by Allah's command, and the underlying purpose is to benefit others, the audience readily understands what is being conveyed of the Divine Mysteries, the expounders of which are mere instruments for the Divine Will from whence the speech emanates and settles into their hearts like torrents of rain. On the contrary, the talk of a man who is not Divinely Authorised to divulge Divine Mysteries, does not strike a responsive chord in the hearts of the audience. People will not understand his discourse on Haqaa-iq and Ma-aarif. Furthermore, he will not be able to present a simple exposition. He will speak laboriously and in circles. The minds of people will not incline to accept his speech nor will they be impressed.

It is incumbent for the Saalik to refrain from speech as long as permission has not been granted to him. The sign of Divine Permission is the entry of transcendental subjects into his heart and their simultaneous manifestation on his tongue. He thus becomes a pure instrument of Divine Knowledge. Such speech is beneficial and impressive.

Often the spiritual realities and mysteries when elaborated appear without lustre. This happens when you had not been authorised to reveal them.

When the Saalik seeks to elaborate on spiritual mysteries and realties without Divine Consent, his own choice and intention play a role. He then ceases to be purely an instrument of the Divine Will. His elaboration will appear without lustre (noor) nor will it be impressive because the darkness of ghairullah has contaminated it. Even if he makes some impression, it will be short-lived because his discourse will not be a Divine Emanation. Hearts will not gain any illumination from such elaboration of transcendental realities by the unauthorised Saalik.

The noor of the Aarifeen and the Hukama (Wisemen) of the Ummah arrives before their statements. Wherever the luminosity of the anwaar reaches, the statements too will reach.

When the }rifeen contemplate to counsel or admonish the servants of Allah, their hearts turn towards Allah Ta'ala in supplication before speaking.

They supplicate for the hearts of people to be endowed with the ability to absorb the naseehat. At that juncture a noor arises from the noor in the baatin of their hearts. This noor enters the hearts of the audience and produces the required ability. Thus, even prior to the discourse of the }rif, his noor reaches their hearts. His speech then follows. The hearts which have already been rendered fertile by the luminosity of the anwaar, readily absorb the statements of naseehat of the }rif. The naseehat is, therefore, impressive and beneficial.

The speech emanating from a speaker will necessarily be cloaked by the bright or dark garb of the heart from which it originates.

The tongue is the translator of the heart. It reveals the state of the heart. Therefore, if the speech originates from an illumined heart, it (the speech) too will be luminous (imbued with noor). It will exercise a beneficial impression on listeners. On the contrary, if the heart is polluted with darkness, the speech too will be cloaked in darkness. It will not enter the hearts of men. It will exercise no benefit.

The elaboration of Haqaa-iq and Ma-aarif is the result of either an abundance of blessings (Faidhaan) of intuitive knowledge (uloom-e-wijdaaniyyah) or it is the initial stage of the Saalik ordained for his guidance. Secondly, it is the state of Saalikeen who have attained perfection.

When torrents of spiritual knowledge and inspirations cascade into the heart of the Saalik in the initial stage of his spiritual sojourn, he is unable to contain it and it spills over onto his tongue. In contrast, the heart of the }rif-e-Kaamil is extremely spacious. His heart is able to contain all the spiritual mysteries inspired into it. He remains in control of the knowledge in his heart. He, therefore, does not reveal it. However, when the need arises to instruct and guide a mureed, he speaks as occasion necessitates.

The variety of discourses of spiritual knowledge and mysteries is the nourishment for the needy listeners. Besides this there is nothing else which you can consume.

Just as food and water are the nourishment of the physical body, so too are uloom and ma-aarif the nourishment of the Rooh. The various discourses of uloom and ma-aarif are the nourishment for listeners who are in need of such sustenance.

In the same way that every person is not able to digest all kinds of food, every one is not able to comprehend and absorb every item of spiritual nourishment. Every aspect of spiritual knowledge is not appropriate for every man. Different people absorb such spiritual nourishment in accordance with their inherent abilities.

THE THIRTIETH CHAPTER ON SHUKR (GRATITUDE)

A man who is not turned towards Allah Ta'ala through the medium of His kindness and bounties, will be dragged with the chains of trials to face Allah.

Those servants in whom nobility and lofty intelligence are inherent, do not become proud and arrogant as a result of the bounties of Allah they are awarded. They do not lose themselves in indolence, unmindfulness and worldly love. The bounties serve to increase their love for their True Benefactor. In consequence they become engrossed in obedience and worship.

Those who consider these bounties as the goal to pursue, do not direct their attention to Allah Ta'ala. Consequently they are caught up in many trials and hardships. These misfortunes act like chains by means of which these recalcitrant servants are forcibly drawn to Allah Ta'ala. In this way they are accepted by Allah Ta'ala. Thus, the trials and hardships are in reality a blessing for them.

He who does not express gratitude for Allah's bounties, has initiated the process of their elimination, and he who is grateful has arranged a solid protection for the bounties.

The one who is not grateful for the bounties of Allah Ta'ala is in reality pursuing the elimination of the bounties. Shukr (gratitude) envisages abandonment of transgression and adoption of obedience. Only The One Being should be acknowledged as the bestower of all bounties. Ingratitude leads to the disappearance of the ni'mat (bounties).

The one who is grateful for the bounties and recognises the True Bestower, is ensured of the perpetuation of the favours of Allah. In fact, the favours will be increased. In this regard, Allah Ta'ala states in the Qur'aan:

"If you are grateful, most certainly I shall increase (the bounties) for you. And, if you are ungrateful, then (know) that My punishment is severe."

Occasionally darkness settles over you so that you understand and appreciate the bounties of your spiritual illumination.

The condition of the bandah here on earth is not always the same. Sometimes the noor of obedience settles on him while at times the darkness of the contamination of desires and unmindfulness settles in his heart. If only the illumination of anwaar had to settle on him, he would not have known its value. Also, the reality of noor is understood from its opposite, viz. darkness (zulmat). When there is no appreciation, the bandah will not express Shukr to his Master. For this reason sometimes the darkness of ghaflat and shahwat settles on the Saalik so that he values the noor of obedience.

He who has not recognised the worth of bounties while they exist (with him), will recognise it after elimination of the bounties.

There are innumerable ni'maat of Allah Ta'ala on man at every moment. He is engulfed by bounties. However, most people fail to appreciate the bounties and remain ungrateful. Some even complaint about Allah Ta'ala and always remain dissatisfied. Such people will only appreciate the value of bounties after they have been snatched away. *(They imply complaint by displaying dissatisfaction and greed – Translator.)*

The continuous and abundant flow of bounties should not make you forgetful of discharging the rights of shukr because your present rank will diminish.

Two things constrain a man to become unmindful of fulfilling the huqooq (rights) of shukr. Either the bounties of Allah are regarded to be insignificant and little in quantity or the ni'maat are viewed to be so abundant that one feels unable to offer adequate thanks and appreciation. Labouring under the misconception of one's inability to express sufficient gratitude, one abstains from shukr.

Any neglect with regard to the fulfilment of the rights of shukr will diminish the rank of the Saalik. Allah Ta'ala has elevated your rank solely by His kindness and favour. Every act rendered by you is rewarded tenfold. He

magnifies your little and insignificant deeds. This demands that you always pursue shukr and righteousness.

Your attitude of refraining from shukr points to your stark ignorance. It appears that you believe in your own ability and effort. You labour under the notion that you practise virtue by your own strength and effort. This attitude is total ignorance. Allah Ta'ala is the Owner of all your actions. He activates your body and limbs. Despite Allah Ta'ala being the True Actor of your righteousness, He honours and ennobles you by awarding you with the titles of Musalli, Saajid, Raaki', }bid, Shaakir and Thaakir.

Ponder and endeavour to fathom your origin. In reality you lack the strength to move a dot. It is by virtue of His pure kindness that you are considered to be a possessor of elevated rank. Therefore, never abandon Shukr nor be wanting in the discharge of its rights.

When He has granted you obedience and along with obedience, independence from all things besides Allah, know that He has granted you zaahiri and baatini bounties in full measure.

When Allah Ta'ala involves a bandah in taa-at (obedience), protects him from indulgence in prohibitions and along with this, He bestows to him the attribute of independence from all others besides Allah Ta'ala, then it should be understood that He has awarded the bandah with physical and spiritual bounties in full measure. There no longer remains the need to desire further ni'maat.

Zaahiri (manifest) ni'maat is the application of the physical body to acts of obedience. Baatini ni'maat is the heart's attainment of freedom from the slavery of all others besides Allah Ta'ala. These are the bounties for which the servant should perpetually express shukr.

Bestowal of ni'maat sufficient for your needs and saving you from transgression are His bounties for you in full measure.

Abundant rizq often leads to a man's transgression and rebellion. He becomes unmindful of Allah while he basks in the luxury of the ni'maat. On the other hand, if the ni'maat are insufficient for his needs, he is disturbed and his hearts finds no rest. He consequently drifts from the path of his Maula (Master). However, the bestowal of bounties which suffices for his needs, neither too much nor too little, is Allah's blessing in full measure on the servant. The bandah having sufficient for his needs should, therefore, wholeheartedly apply himself to the remembrance of Allah Ta'ala.

When Allah has made you outwardly obedient to His command and inwardly submissive to His Power, then He has in fact bestowed a great favour on you.

There is no greater ni'mat than two bounties which Allah Ta'ala confers on the bandah. Firstly, man outwardly becomes obedient to Allah Ta'ala. He involves his body in ibaadat and acts of obedience. Secondly, he is contented with all circumstances Divinely ordained for him, regardless of whether these are pleasing or displeasing to his disposition. He wholeheartedly submits to the decrees of his Maula.

All goodness of the Deen and Dunya are within the confines of these two ni'mats. Thereafter, there is no need for him to look for anything because the excellence of the bandah is in uboodiyat. The bandah to whom these two blessings have been bestowed is in possession of both outward and inward uboodiyat.

The Stages of Shukr

Inspite of the heart's eyes beholding that Allah Ta'ala is unique in the bestowal of bounties, the Shariah has commanded man to incumbently express gratitude (shukr).

The eyes of the heart (i.e. spiritual vision) perceive the transcendal realities of things. Man with a developed spiritual vision sees with clarity that Allah Ta'ala is unique in His attribute of kindness and in the bestowal of favours. He clearly perceives that the only benefactor is Allah Ta'ala. Despite man's spiritual realisation of the True Benefactor's munificence and kindness, the Shariat orders man in this material world of cause and effect to fulfil the duty of shukr. He is instructed to even express gratitude to the overt agencies through whose medium the Divine Bounties reach him. In this regard the Hadith Shareef says:

"Whoever is not grateful to man, is not grateful to Allah."

In this regard there are three types of people. The one type is unmindful of Allah Ta'ala.

They are lost in their ghaflat (negligence unmindfulness). While their corporeal eyes and vision are strong and healthy, their spiritual vision (baseerat) which is the fountain for Divine Perception, is blind. They see favours emanating from human beings without perceiving the Benefactor to be the Creator of the universe. If this attitude has become a belief, then it being shirk is manifest. It will be known as shirk-e-jali (open or conscious shirk). If, while holding this attitude, makloog (created beings) are regarded as the agencies, hence they attribute the favours to these agents, it will be known as shirk-e-khafi (hidden shirk).

With regard to the favours which people acquire from Allah Ta'ala, there are three kinds of persons. The one kind consist of such people who are unmindful of Allah. They remain uncaring while they are concerned with only the physical creation. They do not step beyond the confines of the material creation in the slightest degree. They are spiritually blind and unable to understand the glory of Allah Ta'ala. His attributes are incomprehensible

to them. They perceive the good things as gifts and favours of people without realising that everything is an emanation from the Creator. Example: the employer is believed to be the bestower of the wages. If this idea has become a belief in a person, then he has renounced his Imaan and entered into kufr because the shirk of the belief is quite clear. He has associated creation with the Creator in His attribute of bestowal / providence. Only Allah Ta'ala is Mu'tee (The Bestower).

However, if the belief is that Allah is the actual bestower, but on account of men being the medium for the acquisition of the bounties, these bestowals are attributed to them, then such a belief is shirk-e-khafi or a hidden shirk. According to this belief, man is considered to be a bestower of bounties to a certain degree.

The second type is a Saahib-e-Haqiqat. He is a man who contemplates on the true Sovereign of the universe. He vividly perceives Him and becomes oblivious of creation. He visualises the Cause of all causes and becomes unaware of the agencies. This bandah has, in reality, turned his attention to Allah Ta'ala. The illumination of the lofty Divine Court radiates on him. He has reached the goal of Divine Proximity. However, he is absorbed in the ocean of Divine Illumination (anwaar and tajalliyaat), hence his spiritual vision is blind to the athaar (impressions of the Divine Attributes). His obliviousness dominates his consciousness, his stage of Fanaa dominates his stage of Baqa and his absence dominates his presence.

The second type is a bandah whose gaze of baseerat has shifted from this external material world. His gaze has gained the ability to see realities. Being engrossed in the mushaahadah of the true Sovereign of the universe, he has become oblivious of creation. He has emerged from all vestiges of duality and has entered the realm of Unity. Having gained the perception of the Cause of all causes, he becomes unaware of the intermediate agencies. The material or worldly agents, means and ways (the asbaab) have disappeared from in front of his gaze.

The servant in this lofty state is kaamil (perfect) in relation to the people of ghaflat (viz. the first type). However, he has not reached the best and most perfect stage nor has he yet mounted the stage of consciousness because he is

absorbed in the ocean of Divine Illumination. His gaze of baseerat, therefore, is unable to see creation. Besides Wahdat (Unity), there is nothing in his presence. His state of obliviousness is greater than his state of consciousness. The mushaahadah of Allah is dominant in him. His stage of Farq (Maqaam-e-Farq) is overwhelmed. The vision of Allah along with the perception of creation is termed Maqaam-e-Farq.

The state of Fanaa (absolute annihilation of the self) permeates him. He lacks the stage of Baqa. Baqa is the state of consciousness which is Divinely Bestowed after having attained Fanaa. Ghaibat (absence) dominates his huzoor (presence). Makhlooq (creation) does not feature in his presence.

This bandah is perfect in the shukr which he discharges for the bounties of Allah. He expresses gratitude to only Allah Ta'ala and to no one else. This bandah is exempted from discharging the shukr of people, which has devolved as an incumbent duty on him. In view of his state of annihilation, he is excused from the obligation of expressing shukr to people. He lacks the ability to express shukr to beings besides Allah Ta'ala because his gaze has completely shifted from the intermediate agencies.

The third type is a bandah on a higher stage of perfection than the second kind. He has drunk from the fountain of Tauhid and has become fully conscious and aware. Inspite of his vision not being on aliens (i.e. all things besides Allah), he is conscious of their conditions and circumstances. His vision of Allah does not prevent him from perceiving creation nor does his vision of creation form a veil to screen him from the Creator. His Fanaa does not impede his Baqa nor is his Baqa a barrier for his Fanaa. He fulfils everyone's right with equanimity.

The third kind of person occupies the highest rank. He is superior than the second type. He has drunk from elixir of Tauhid and after having traversed Fanaa and all states higher, he has arrived at the station of Baqa. For him creation has become the mirror for viewing the splendour and beauty of Allah Ta'ala.

The bandah in this elevated and most perfect state discharges everyone's right correctly. While expressing gratitude to people, he discharges Allah's

rights of shukr in proper measure. He is neither like the ghaafil (the first type) nor like the Faani (the second type). He is on the highest and most perfect stage of shukr.

The Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) illustrates the latter two stages of shukr by citing the following episode:

> When Aishah Siddiqah's (radhiyallahu anha) innocence was proclaimed, exculpating her from the slanderous accusation made against her, Abu Bakr Siddique (radhiyallahu anhu) said: "Get up and express your gratitude to Rasulullah (ﷺ)." She replied: 'I swear by Allah that I shall not express gratitude to anyone besides Allah Ta'ala".
> Abu Bakr Siddique (radhiyallahu anhu) was guided by the demand of his most perfect state of Baqa. Even Allah Ta'ala instructs: "Be grateful to Me and to parents". Rasulullah (ﷺ) said: "Whoever is not grateful to people, is not grateful to Allah."
> On this occasion Aishah Siddiqah (radhiyallahu anha) was annihilated in her prevailing state, hence she perceived only Allah Ta'ala.

The munaafiqeen had levelled a slanderous accusation against Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha). As a result, many days Rasulullah (ﷺ) grieved. In the beginning Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) was unaware of the slanderous rumour about her. When she was informed thereof, she was smitten with grief. She lost much weight in consequence of the great worry and heartache which overwhelmed her. Further, she was deprived of the earlier attention which Rasulullah (ﷺ) used to give her. This was the severest blow for her. Meanwhile, Rasulullah (ﷺ) investigated the allegations. Unable to bear the sorrow and grief, Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) with the permission of Rasulullah (ﷺ) left for the home of her parents. One day Rasulullah (ﷺ) went to meet her. He said: "O Aishah! If you have sinned, repent." Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) requested her parents to reply on her behalf. They declined, commenting: "What can we say in Rasulullah's presence?" On hearing this comment, Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) stood up and after reciting the praise of Allah said:

> "Our condition is like that of Yusuf's (alayhis salaam) father. When Yusuf's brothers reported to their father that a wolf had eaten Yusuf (alayhis salaam) – they even brought along Yusuf's blood-stained kurtah – Yaqub (alayhis salaam) said:

'Sabr is beautiful, and Allah is the One from Whom aid is sought regarding that which you are narrating'."

She then sat down. As she sat, the procession of Wahi (revelation) began.

After termination of the revelation, the blessed face of Rasulullah (ﷺ) was glowing radiantly with happiness. He exclaimed:

"O Aishah! Be happy, Allah Ta'ala has proclaimed your innocence."

He then recited those verses of Surah Noor which were just revealed to proclaim her innocence and to announce severe punishment for those who slander chaste women. It was on this occasion that Hadhrat Abu Bakr Siddique (radhiyallahu anhu) ordered Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) to express shukr to Rasulullah (ﷺ) because he was the medium for the announcement of her innocence. In response, Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) took an oath and declared that besides Allah Ta'ala, she will not express shukr to anyone.

In this episode is the basis for both the stages of Fanaa and Baqa. Hadhrat Abu Bakr (radhiyallahu anhu) directed Hadhrat Aishah (radhiyallahu anha) towards the station of Baqa while in her prevalent state, she was in the state of Fanaa, hence oblivious of all others. It was for this reason that she was unable to direct shukr to anyone besides Allah Ta'ala. Although this was the state of Hadhrat Siddiqah at that specific occasion, her usual condition at all times was *akmal* (most perfect) having attained both stages of Fanaa and Baqa.

With regard to the incidence of bounties there are three classes of people. One class consists of those who are pleased with the favours and become proudful. Their happiness is not by way of expressing gratitude to their Benefactor and Creator, but is on account of the advantage they acquire from the bounties. These people are careless. The following aayat applies to them:

"Ultimately, when they become proud on account of the favours We granted them, then We suddenly caught them."

Of the three classes of people there are with regard to attitudes in relation to the favours they receive, the first kind consists of such people who are driven to pride by the possession of bounties. Their happiness and pleasure are not expressions of gratitude to Allah Ta'ala for His favours, but are solely because of the advantage and enjoyment they derive from the bounties. Lost in their pleasures, they completely forget their Benefactor, Allah Ta'ala.

Allah's punishment suddenly overtakes them. For such people the Qur'aan says:

"When they became proud on account of the favours which they were given, We caught them suddenly."

The second class consists of those people whose happiness is an expression of gratitude to the Benefactor and is the result of His mushaahadah. The following statement of Allah Ta'ala applies to them:

"Say: Be happy with the kindness and mercy of Allah. This is better than what they are accumulating."

The second class of people do not become happy because of the bounty. Their happiness is on account of kindness of Allah Ta'ala. They are concerned with the Being Who has awarded the bounty. They express their gratitude to their Benefactor. The following aayat describes the condition of these grateful ones:

"Say (O Muhammad!): "With the kindness and mercy of Allah should they be happy. That is better than that which they are accumulating."

This class of people is not unmindful of their Master and Benefactor even though they have not yet attained the state of perfection in relation to those who are *akmal* (most perfect) and *afdhal* (the best). People in this second class do not in entirely direct their attention to Allah Ta'ala. Their nafs does turn towards the bounties as well. Thus, they do entertain a desire for bounties to a certain degree.

The third class consists of such people who are neither concerned with the outward benefits (of bounties) nor with their inward (spiritual) appeal. The bounties do not make them unmindful of the Benefactor in any way whatever.

The Beautiful vision of their Mahboob (Allah Ta'ala) has made them oblivious of all things besides His Beauty. All concerns of their hearts are focused on only Allah Ta'ala. They perceive nothing besides Him. The following statement of Allah Ta'ala befits this class of people:

'Say: Allah! Then leave them to play in their conjecturing.'

Allah Ta'ala revealed to Nabi Dawood (alayhis salaam):

'O Dawood! Inform my true servants to be pleased with only Me and to cool their hearts with My remembrance.'

May Allah Ta'ala grant us all happiness by means of His pleasure. May he make us among those who understand Him. May He save us from being among the unmindful ones and may He direct us along the path of the people of Taqwa with His grace and kindness.

The people in this class do not become unmindful of Allah Ta'ala by indulgence in the external benefits of the bounties and favours nor do they concern themselves with the spiritual dimension of the bounties by considering these ni'maat as being the signs of Allah's kindness. In any such attitude there is also the element of diversion – of turning the attention to ghairullah (i.e. things besides Allah). They are in contemplation of the Beatific Vision of the True Beloved. Their absorption in this contemplation has expelled from their hearts whatever is ni'mat or not.

Unlike the former two classes, they are totally immersed in the perception of Divine Beauty. The variety of intentions and desires of their hearts have all gathered in the Being (Zaat) of Muhsin-e-Haqeeqi (The True Benefactor). Their attention is not on the bounty from any angle whatever.

The following Qur'aanic aayat pertains to the people in this class:

"Say (O Muhammad!) Allah! Then leave them to play in their falsehood."

Allah is their Beloved. They are concerned with Him alone. Everyone else and everything else are expelled from their hearts.

The instruction to Dawood (alayhis salaam) commands that man seeks for happiness and peace of mind in the pleasure and remembrance of Allah.

THE SUPPLICATION OF THE AUTHOR

O my Allah! When even in my state of wealth I am dependent, then how can I not be dependent in my state of poverty?

Man's original and natural attribute is faqr (poverty). He is, therefore, dependent on Allah Ta'ala. Dependence which is likewise man's natural quality is inseparable from him. His state of *ghina* (wealth / independence) is a temporary acquisition. Even in the state of *ghina* he is entirely dependent on Allah. Thus, in the state of faqr, man's dependence is to a greater degree.

O my Allah! When I am ignorant even in my state of knowledge, then my ignorance in my state of ignorance will be greatly magnified.

The lack of inherent *kamaal* (excellence) indicates that whatever excellence man has is a temporary acquisition. *Jhal* (ignorance) is man's original condition while *Ilm* (knowledge) is an acquired attribute. A temporary attribute which has been acquired is prone to elimination. Man's knowledge, therefore, is devoid of the substance of reality. When he is ignorant even when he possesses the acquired attribute of knowledge, then his ignorance in the absence of knowledge is intense.

O my Allah! The variety of your schemes and the swiftness of your Taqdeer have prevented your Aarifeen from snugness and comfort in the gifts You award, and from despairing in calamity.

The Divine Schemes are ever-changing. A man is sometimes in poverty. Allah Ta'ala then bestows wealth to him and sometimes the rich is reduced to penury. Health is transformed into sickness and vice versa. Strength into weakness and weakness into strength; honour is snatched away and disgrace sets in. The lowly is elevated and granted respect and rank.

These ever-changing conditions are part of Taqdeer (Predestination) which unravel with swiftness. These two factors prevent the }rifeen from snugness in the comforts and bounties they are endowed with, hence they do

not focus their attention on the material and spiritual bounties awarded to them. They have understood the temporary nature of these awards. These are things which come and go. It is, therefore, not worthwhile to attach the heart to things which will disappear.

They also do not lose hope in Allah's mercy when calamities descend on them. They are fully aware that these calamities too are not enduring. These too will disappear.

O my Allah! All things befitting my evil and my contemptibility are from me, and all things deserving of Your grace are from You.

Transgression, sin and unmindfulness origin from man's evil and contemptibility. It is man's inherent quality to fail in the execution of the Huqooq (Rights) of Allah Ta'ala. Allah's relationship with man is one of grace, kindness and forgiveness.

O my Allah! Even before the existence of my impotency, You have confirmed your grace and kindness for me. Will You now, after the existence of my impotency, deprive me of Your grace and kindness?

Allah Ta'ala is Raheem and Ra-oof. His mercy and kindness are limitless. His attributes are eternal, hence His kindness and grace are perpetually with man.

O my Allah! If goodness emanates from me, it is Your grace and favour on me. If evil emanates from me, it is Your justice and the confirmation of Your decree on me.

Obedience and acts of virtue which man renders are not by virtue of his effort and strength, but are the result of Allah's grace and kindness which He confers to man. On the contrary, the perpetration of evil is not injustice by Allah Ta'ala. It is His justice. He, being the true King, is entitled to act in His kingdom as He pleases. Thus, when He refrains from preventing man from the commission of evil, He is not being unjust to him. His action is just.

In man's commission of evil is also the confirmation of Allah's indictment against man who will not be able to deny his evil in the Divine Court.

> **O my Allah! When You are my Surety, how will You assign me to my nafs? When You are my Helper, how can I be disgraced? When You are merciful to me, how can I fail. I make my poverty a medium for reaching You. How can I take as a medium something which cannot reach You?**

Allah is man's protector. The supplication is, therefore, to be saved from becoming trapped by the nafs which destroys man.

Allah's Name is Naasir (The Helper). He is, therefore, man's helper. His aid is, therefore, with man. With Allah's aid, the bandah will never be disgraced. The bandah will not suffer failure when Allah's kindness manifests itself. When the bandah is truly dependent on Allah, His aid will most certainly be forthcoming.

Since man's deeds are insignificant, he cannot present them as a medium for attaining Divine Proximity. Rather, the bandah presents his poverty (faqr) as a medium for attaining closeness to Allah Ta'ala.

Something which has a relationship with the object of intercession is offered as a waseelah (medium). If there is no relationship, the appointment of the medium as the intercessor will be futile. The waseelah should have the ability to enter into the presence of the one to whom the intercession is to be presented. But faqr (poverty and dependence) lack this ability and relationship. There is no relationship between Allah Ta'ala and faqr. Hence, the Shaikh, retracting this supplication says:

> 'How can I take as a waseelah something which is unable to reach Your lofty Court?'

Further, when the bandah considers his state of faqr to be of the quality which renders it significant enough to act as his waseelah, it indicates dependence on his faqr and implies a claim of faqr made by the bandah. He

thus reposes reliance on one of his personal attributes. The faqr is, therefore, defective. Perfect faqr is to focus the attention solely on Allah Ta'ala.

O my Allah! When my condition is not hidden from You, how can I lodge any complaint? When my speech emanates in consequence of Your command, how can I proclaim it to by my talk? When my hopes have travelled to Your lofty court, how can I be unsuccessful? When the point of initiation and return of my states are You, how can they not be beautiful and beloved?

Why should man complain when all his conditions are conspicuous to Allah Ta'ala? A complaint is lodged to a being who is unaware. All states and conditions of man are emanations of the Divine Being. Everything is His Command. Everything is therefore beautiful and beloved. There is no need for the bandah to despair.

O my Allah! Despite my imbecility and short-sightedness, you are most gracious to me, and despite the evil of my deeds, you are most merciful to me.

When hardships settle on man, he becomes resentful although there is benefit for him in these calamities. In view of his childishness and short-sightedness he cannot fathom the wisdom underlying the hardships Divinely imposed on him. But, Allah's mercy is with him.

Although man deserves to be eliminated on account of his transgression, Allah's wide mercy always encompasses him.

O my Allah! How close are You to me and how far am I from You! When You are so gracious to me, what can block me from Your mushaahadah?

Allah is closer to man than his own life, but man on account of his nafsaani attributes, is far from Allah Ta'ala. Not a moment passes without Allah's mercy and grace being on the bandah. When Allah is so magnanimous and gracious to his bandah, nothing can impede him from the perception of Allah Ta'ala.

O my Allah! I have realised from my changing circumstances and conditions that it is Your intention and will that I should recognise You in everything to such a degree that I do not remain ignorant of Your ma'rifat in anything.

The changing circumstances and conditions occurring to man are numerous. Richness, poverty, health, sickness, respect, happiness, despondency, etc. are among man's changing conditions. When the bandah reflects on the different conditions occurring to him, he will realise that Allah Ta'ala wishes that he recognises Him. The bandah should not be ignorant of Allah's recognition in all things.

If the bandah's condition was static, undergoing no change, his ma'rifat of Allah would remain defective. If for example, the bandah's state of health and wealth had to remain constant, his recognition of Allah would remain imperfect because Allah is also the eliminator of sickness and poverty. This ma'rifat would have been denied to the bandah. Similarly, if he remained perpetually in the state of sickness, the bandah would have been deprived of the ma'rifat of Allah being the bestower of health.

O my Allah! Whenever my evil sealed my tongue, Your grace opened its speech. When my evil attributes constrained me to despair, Your kindness raised hope in me.

Sins silence the bandah's tongue which supplicates for Allah's proximity. This pursuit (talab) is the result of friendship and love which are the products of obedience to Allah Ta'ala. Since the bandah is devoid of obedience and possesses only defect and incompetence, the tongue of pursuit is silenced. But the kindness of Allah activates the tongue with speech. When the bandah realises that Allah is gracious, he musters up courage.

Evil attributes have created despair in the bandah who feels that he is unable to adopt steadfastness and firmness in the Path of Allah Ta'ala. However, each time the despair is displaced by hope as a result of Allah's kindness and favour.

O my Allah! When even my virtues are evils, how can my evils not be evil? When my knowledge of realities is merely an empty claim, how can my claim not be merely an empty claim?

On account of riya (show) and ujub (vanity), the virtuous deeds of the bandah are also evils. What then is the condition of his evil deeds?

The haqaa-iq (knowledge of Divine Secrets and Realities) of the bandah are merely claims put forward by him. The Shaikh, because of humility and modesty feels that his knowledge of transcendental realities is only an empty claim. When the glory and splendour of Allah Ta'ala are realised by the bandah, he sees the emptiness of whatever knowledge he possesses. If this is the case of the knowledge, then to a far greater degree will a claim of knowledge be a baseless claim.

O my Allah! Your operative decree and Your predominance will have left no speaker and no man of rank with confidence.

Allah's command operates in everything and His will dominates all things. Thus, a man who gives discourses on haqaa-iq and ma-aarif should not labour under any deception of him being a great researcher and a man of subtle knowledge. He should not be vain on account of his ability of expression and eloquence in elaborating on Divine Truths and Mysteries. Allah's Command and Will can snatch away whatever the man of knowledge thinks he knows. Such episodes have already transpired.

Also, a man of spiritual rank should not be vain because of his rank of elevation. Ranks of spiritual elevation are Divine Bounties which Allah Ta'ala is fully capable of snatching away. There were many men of such ranks who were demoted and had their loftiness snatched away. Thus, no one should repose confidence in his excellences.

O my Allah! I have rendered many acts of obedience and I have solidified many states (haalaat), but Your justice (adl) has suppressed my reliance on them (my obedience and states). In fact, Your Fadhl has diverted me from dependence on them.

The bandah offers many deeds of obedience outwardly. He also purifies his spiritual states from contaminations, imbuing in them ikhlaas (sincerity). The bandah, therefore, gains the impression of having gained entry into a powerful fortress. He feels that he is, therefore, protected against the subtleties of riya (show) and ujub (vanity). But when the bandah reflects on the *adl* (justice) of Allah, his reliance on his assumed fortress dissipates.

The demand of Divine Justice is that Allah does as He pleases. It is, therefore, within the purview of His *adl* to ignore the obedience and worship of His servants and even punish man for their worship.

The Shaikh progresses further and says that, in fact, it is Allah's fadhl (kindness) which has constrained the bandah to abandon dependence on his obedience and worship. Thus the bandah's reliance is on Allah's fadhl, not on his deeds of virtue.

O my Allah! You are aware that although I lack constancy in obedience, I am constant in my intention and love.

The bandah is deficient in being constant in ibaadat. His constancy is erratic. Nevertheless, he is constant in his love for ibaadat and in his resolve of obedience. This constancy too is the consequence of Allah's fadhl. Many people are deprived of this constancy.

O my Allah! Since You are the All-Powerful, why should I make an intention. When You are the Commander, how can I refrain from making a firm resolution?

Allah's power and control extend over all things. How could it then be possible for the bandah to resolve to be obedient and refrain from transgression? It is quite possible that Allah may neutralise the bandah's resolution. Further, how is it possible for the bandah to refrain from forming a resolution when Allah Ta'ala commands righteousness and prohibits evil? The bandah is, therefore, in bewilderment between these two opposites. What should he do? He is helpless and unable to plan. He lacks the ability for

firm resolution, but he is under pressure not to abandon resolution (azm). Thus, the bandah has no option other than resigning (tasleem) himself to Allah Ta'ala and reposing his full reliance on him.

In view of this bewilderment, the }rifeen abstain from making resolutions. They assign all their affairs to Allah Ta'ala. (This state of assignment is called Tafweez.) It is because of this attitude that it is said: 'The }rif has no heart'.

O my Allah! My wavering in the circumstances of creation necessitates remoteness from You. Keep me wholly resolute in a service which will deliver me to Your lofty court.

The bandah's heart flutters about indecisively in the different conditions attendant to creation. Sometimes the bandah strikes up a relationship with one person and then again with another person. Sometimes he pursues spiritual conditions and experiences. The bandah's vacillation in these aspects of creation impedes him from reaching Allah's proximity. His aimless wanderings increase his distance from the Divine Court. The bandah should, therefore, supplicate to be applied in entirety to such a service which ensures that his bond with creation be served so that he reaches Allah Ta'ala.

O my Allah! How is it possible to rationally deduct Your existence from things whose existence is dependent on You? Is it possible for other objects to attain such a conspicuous appearance which You lack in order to reveal You? Since when are You absent that proof is required for Your existence? Since when are You far away that creation needs to reach You?

Here the Shaikh (rahmatullah alayh) expresses surprise at the attempt to prove the existence of Allah Ta'ala by the utilisation of created objects in the process of logical deduction (istidlaal). If Allah Ta'ala had not created these objects, they would not have existed. Their very existence is dependent on Allah Ta'ala. How can such dependables constitute proof for His existence? The proof (daleel) is always more conspicuous than the object it sets out to prove (madlool). Is it then possible for created objects to be more conspicuous than the Creator? Obviously not! Creation, therefore, cannot be

an adequate basis to prove His existence. In fact, His intense conspicuousness makes His existence is self-evident, requiring no proof.

Proof is required to confirm what is absent. But, He is never absent. He is not far away, hence there is no need to deliver creation to Him. He is omnipresent and more conspicuous than every object in creation. Thus, the exercise in logical deduction to prove His existence is redundant and superfluous.

> O my Allah! The eyes which cannot discern You as the Guard and Protector are blind. May the trade of that bandah who has not taken a share of Your love suffer a loss.

The bandah who fails to discern that Allah Ta'ala watches and guards him, is blind. The bandah who does not act to achieve the love of Allah will always flounder in loss even though he does not understand this.

> O my Allah! You have instructed us to refer to the aathaar (the impressions of His attributes). Guide me towards the aathaar with the mantle of Your illumination and with the intuitive gaze (baseerat) so that I may turn towards You, as commanded by You, with a protected heart and high courage. You have power over all things.

Once the bandah attaines Wusool and Mushaahdah, Allah Ta'ala orders him to return to his earthly relationships, e.g. family and wealth. He is ordered to pay attention to the rights and obligations connected with creation. The bandah is, therefore, fearful of being deprived of Allah's mushaahadah by his worldly associations. He thus supplicates for Divine Aid and guidance. He petitions Allah to enshroud him with His illumination and to strengthen his heart so that even while he is physically with creation, he should see only Allah Ta'ala.

The bandah supplicates for baseerat so that he is always guided and prevented from engrossment in creation, so that the mushaahadah of Allah appears to him in everything. Since Allah has power over everything, He can fulfil all supplications.

O my Allah! My contemptibility is known to You. My condition is not hidden from You. I supplicate to reach Your lofty court. I ask to be guided to Your lofty court with You. Guide me to You with Your Noor and allow me to stand in Your Presence like a true slave.

Man's original state of contemptibility is open to Allah Ta'ala. The condition of the bandah is not concealed from Allah Ta'ala. In reality, the revelation to man of his own state of contemptibility is respect. The bandah who is unaware of his contemptibility and thinks of himself as being honourable, is truly contemptible.

The bandah supplicates to reach Allah with His aid. His gaze is never on his own efforts and deeds. He seeks to be guided to Allah's recognition with Allah Himself. Unlike others, he does not resort to the process of logical deduction to recognise and attain Him. Someone asked an }rif: "How did you recognise Allah?" He replied: "I recognised my Rabb with my Rabb." The supplication of the bandah is, therefore, to be guided to Allah Ta'ala with His Noor, which means the heart being inspired with ma'rifat.

The bandah further petitions to be permitted to stand in the Divine Presence as a true slave by suppression of the attributes of Ruboobiyat (e.g. knowledge, power, etc. which have been created in man) and the manifestation of the qualities of uboodiyat (enslavement to Allah). These are the attributes of humility, lowliness, weakness and contemptibility.

O my Allah! Instruct me in Your hidden knowledge and protect me with the secret of Your guarded Names. O my Allah! Grant me firmness in the established stations of the People of Qurb and let me walk the path of the People of Jazb.

Hidden knowledge refers to Divine Mysteries and Secrets which are bestowed to the Auliya. The guarded Names are the Beautiful Names of Allah Ta'ala, which are protected against defilement and disgrace. The secrets of these Names refer to the illumination emanating from them. The bandah

seeks protection against all evils with the aid of the Divine Illumination of His Names.

O my Allah! With Your plan make me independent of my plan and with Your will make me independent of my will. Establish me in the centre of my restlessness.

The bandah supplicates for only Divine Dispensation. The gaze should be only on the Plan and Decree of Allah Ta'ala, not on the plans and efforts of man. When man is concerned with his own schemes, he becomes trapped in his nafs. He then drifts away from Allah's presence.

All affairs of the bandah should be directed only by the Divine Will. The individual's will should not feature in any affair. When the bandah operates his own will, he clashes with the Divine Will.

The centres of restlessness refer to the lowly attributes of man, e.g. humility, weakness, contemptibility. In these conditions the bandah always supplicates to Allah Ta'ala. It behoves the bandah to keep in view his weakness and contemptibility.

O my Allah! Save me from the disgrace and greed of my nafs. Cleanse me of my doubts and shirk before I am lowered into the grave. I seek Your aid against nafsaani desires and shaitaani thoughts. Help me, O Allah! I trust only in You. Do not assign me to anyone else. I ask only from You. Do not make me despair. I am enthusiastic for Your grace and kindness. Do not deprive me. Guide me to Your lofty court and do not cast me off. I am standing askance on Your threshold. Do not buffet me away.

The greed of the nafs means man's desires and hopes whose fulfilment he seeks from others besides Allah Ta'ala. Doubt here means the constriction of the heart when something displeasing happens. This constriction produces darkness in the heart. Cleansing the heart for the attainment of purity means the development of yaqeen which expands the heart. True peace and pleasure from Allah Ta'ala settle in the heart which has been purified.

Shirk here refers to the heart's indifference of the true Cause and its relationship with the external agencies.

When the darkness of *shak* (doubt) becomes dominant, the noor of yaqeen diminishes. The heart then inclines towards shirk because Tauhid cannot be visualised without the noor of Yaqeen. Man then turns towards the external agencies and superficial causes of things. The bandah, therefore, supplicates to be purified of doubt and shirk.

O my Allah! When Your pleasure does not stand in need of a cause, then how can any of my actions or conditions be a cause for it? O my Allah! When Your perfect Zaat is independent of deriving any benefit from even Yourself, then what benefit can accrue to You from me who is defective and contemptible?

Ridhaa (Pleasure) is a Divine Attribute. All attributes of Allah Ta'ala are eternal. The eternal has no cause. Since Allah's attribute of Ridhaa being eternal has no cause, it is inconceivable that any act of the bandah can ever be the cause for the ridhaa of Allah. Nothing can act on Allah Ta'ala. Change does not come to Him. Allah's ridhaa is not dependent on the bandah's actions. The bandah's good deeds and conditions are the effects of Allah's ridhaa.

O my Allah! Qadr (Predestination) and Your decree have overwhelmed me and nafsaani desires have enchained me in powerful chains. Be my helper and aid me, and through me aid also my associates. Make me so independent so that with the mushaahadah of Your grandeur and beauty I become independent from my motives.

When the bandah contemplates to practise obedience or abstain from transgression, his resolution is negated by Fate. The bandah is also fettered by the strong chains of the nafs. He, therefore, has no alternative other than Divine Aid. The bandah in his supplication should also include his relatives and associates. Independence from all things besides Allah Ta'ala is an attribute for which the bandah supplicates so that he remains independent from even his own motives. When the bandah is endowed with perpetual

mushaahadah, he will be annihilated and oblivious of even his own motives and desires.

You are The Being Who has infused into the hearts of Your Friends the anwaar of ma-aarif. They have, therefore, recognised You and acknowledged Your unity. You are the pure Being Who has expelled from the hearts of Friends all alien relationships. They have, thus, made only You their beloved. When they are restless, they do not seek support from anyone besides You. Only You are affectionate to them. Therefore, the relationship and contaminations of this world have terrified them. Only You have guided them, hence the path of truth has been revealed to them.

The bandah is able to recognise Allah Ta'ala by the illumination of ma'rifat with which He brightens the heart. As a result, the servants of Allah affirm His unity and perceive His reality. It is Allah Who purifies the hearts of His friends from all alien influences. All things besides Allah are expelled from their hearts which become the repositories of Divine Love. They discern the path of truth by means of Divine Noor which guides them along.

What has man found when he has failed to find You? What has he not found after having found You? Whoever was pleased with anyone besides You, has failed and whoever attempted to divert himself from Your lofty court, suffered loss and ruin.

The one who observes creation with his eyes and heart without perceiving Allah Ta'ala with his heart, has in reality seen nothing, because creation is pure non-existence. He has, therefore, gained nothing by his observation. On the other hand, whoever has gained Allah's mushaahadah has found everything despite him being deprived of the good things of the world.

The bandah who seeks the pleasure of things besides Allah, e.g. worldly pleasures or spiritual states, is a failure. He has suffered a tremendous loss.

O my Allah! You have not decreased Your kindness, how can I then cherish hope in others? You have not changed Your habit of awarding favour to Your servants. How then can I ask from others?

The limitless ocean of Allah's kindness is eternal. It never diminishes. The bandah should, therefore, not have any hope in others. Allah Ta'ala always is the bestower of bounties to His servants. The bandah should not, therefore, ask from others besides Allah Ta'ala.

O Allah! You have given Your Friends the taste of the sweetness of Your love. They have thus stood up with love and humility in Your presence. O Allah! You have cloaked Your Friends with the mantle of Your grandeur. They have thus become honourable with it.

The happiness felt from the perception (mushaahadah) of the beauty of the Beloved is termed *oens*. When the bandah experience the pleasure of Divine Love, all other relationships are expelled from his heart and he stands with love and humility in the presence of Allah Ta'ala.

The mantle of Allah's grandeur refers to the dignity and awe which surround the personalities of Allah's friends, i.e. the Auliya. People are awed simply by looking at the Auliya. The Auliya derive their respect and honour from Divine Grandeur, not from any worldly agency.

O my Allah! Even before the existence of the Thaakireen, You remembered them with Your Favours and even before the attention of the worshippers, you commenced Your Favours on them. Even prior to the requests of the supplicators, You were generous with Your Forgiveness. You are most-Forgiving. After bestowing Your bounties to us, you asked us for a loan of these (bounties).

Long before the bandah who became a thaakir came into existence, Allah Ta'ala by virtue of His kindness remembered him. In consequence of His remembrance, he bestowed the gift of existence (wujood). Even prior to the bandah becoming a worshipper and a supplicator, Allah Ta'ala turned His gaze of mercy to the bandah by granting him the wonderful ni'mat of wujood.

Whatever Allah Ta'ala bestows to the bandah, He asks it as a loan. The Qur'aan says:

"Who will give Allah a beautiful loan?"

The reward for advancing this loan to Allah will be granted in the }khirah. Allah Ta'ala does not acquire any benefit from the loan the bandah advances to Him. The term qardh (loan) is used figuratively and indicates Allah's love for His servants. It is like giving a child a gift, then asking it on loan and returning a superior item.

O my Allah! Call me with Your mercy so that I reach You. Draw me to You with Your kindness so that my attention is wholly focused on You. O my Allah! Although I disobey You, my hope is not severed. If I obey You, Your fear does not depart from me. O my Allah! The whole world has buffeted me towards You. The knowledge of Your grace and kindness has delivered me to Your doors.

The bandah cannot reach Allah Ta'ala on the strength of his defective deeds and efforts. The bandah, therefore, supplicates for Divine Assistance to be drawn to Him by His grace and kindness. Man's efforts minus Divine Mercy cannever deliver the bandah to Allah Ta'ala.

The bandah should never despair of the mercy of Allah despite his acts of disobedience. The kindness and forgiveness of Allah are not dependent on any cause.

The bandah should not become audacious on account of his acts of obedience and worship. Allah does as He pleases. Even if He punishes the bandah for worshipping, it will be proper and just. He is the true King.

When the bandah is conscious of reality, he realises that everything in creation pushes him towards Allah Ta'ala. Everything sends out the message: "I am perishable. Do not strike up a relationship with me."

The bandah's knowledge of the fact that Allah Ta'ala is merciful and kind constrains him to turn towards Allah. He, therefore, never relents in his endeavours to reach his Creator.

O my Allah! You are my Hope. How can I then be absent from You? I am leaning on You. How can I then be disgraced? O my Allah! You have planted me in disgrace. How can I then acquire respect? You have related me to You. How then can I not be honourable? You have placed me in poverty and dependence. How then can I be independent? You have made me independent with Your existence. How than can I be dependent?

When the bandah's hope is in Allah, he will not despair. When he derives support from Allah, he cannever be disgraced. Man's origin is non-existence (adm). He, therefore, cannot have izzat (respect) as his original attribute. Eternal izzat is the attribute of only Allah Ta'ala. Since the bandah is related to Allah Ta'ala by virtue of his love and obedience, he derives honour and respect from Allah's izzat. Thus, in relation to his origin, man is contemptible, but in relation to his bond with Allah he is honourable.

With regard to his origin, the bandah is a pauper and dependent. With the existence of Allah, the bandah is rendered free from dependence on others. When the bandah has acquired the treasure of Allah's Qurb (Proximity), he cannever then be in need of others.

You are the Being besides Whom there is no object of worship. You have bestowed Your recognition to everything. Nothing is unaware of You. You have enabled me to acquire Your recognition in everything. I have, therefore, seen with clarity Your illumination in everything. You are conspicuous to all. You are the Being Who is established on the Arsh (Throne) with Your attributes of mercy. The Arsh has disappeared in His mercy just as the universe has disappeared in His Arsh.

Allah is the only Being Who deserves worship. Besides Him there is no object of worship. Every object in creation recognises Allah according to the degree of ma'rifat bestowed to it. Every object is like a mirror reflecting Allah's beauty for the bandah who perceives Allah's manifestation in all things. Thus, Allah is conspicuous and revealed to everyone and everything.

Allah's limitless mercy has ensconced the Arsh which has disappeared in his Rahmat (mercy) just as the entire universe is an infinitesimal atom having seemingly disappeared under the vast canopy of the Divine Throne.

You have eliminated aathaar (impressions) with aathaar. You have annihilated aliens with the heavens of anwaar. O Allah! You are the Being Who is concealed from the eyes by the veils of Your dignity. You are the Being Who has manifested Your illumination in the hearts of the Aarifeen. Your infinite honour has become established in their hearts. How can You be concealed? You are revealed and conspicuous. How can You be absent? You are the Guard and You are present. You are the One to give guidance. I seek aid from only Him.

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The aathaar mentioned first refers to the heavens, the planets, the Looh z), the Qalam (Pen) and all other aspects of creation besides ?(Looh-e-Mahf the Divine Throne. The second aathaar refers to the glorious Arsh (Throne) of Allah Ta'ala. In comparison to the Arsh all creation recedes into oblivion. This is the meaning of annihilation in this context.

Aliens in this context also means the glorious Arsh. In relation to Divine Illumination it is described as an alien, i.e. something besides Allah Ta'ala. The infinite Rahmat of Allah Ta'ala encompasses the Arsh and renders it an insignificant, infinitesimal spectacle which has receded into oblivion. Entire creation, including the Arsh, is entirely encompassed by the infinite Rahmat of Allah.

Eyes are unable to perceive Allah Ta'ala. Seeing Allah Ta'ala with the corporeal eyes in this world is an absolute impossibility. In the }khirah, while the physical eyes will be empowered to see Allah Ta'ala, the sight will not be encompassing. Created objects cannot see or comprehend the eternal

Being in entirely and totality. Such total comprehension of Allah Ta'ala is an impossibility even in the }khirah.

Allah Ta'ala is never concealed from the }rifeen whose hearts have been permeated by the radiant illumination of Allah's Sifaat-e-Jamaaliyah (The Beautiful Attributes) such as splendour and beauty. Their hearts are imbued with great respects for the grandeur of Allah Ta'ala.

Allah is more conspicuous than all things. He is, therefore, invisible. He stands guarding and protecting entire creation.

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Al-hamdulillah! The commentary on Itm~mun Ni'am has been accomplished on 11th Rabiuth Thaani 1237 on Tuesday. May Allah Ta'ala make it beneficial by His fadhl.

SIMPLIFICATION OF SULOOK

titled:

AS-SALSABEEL LI AABIRIS SABEEL

(The Fountain of Paradise for the Traveller of the Path)

This article is from the noble discourses of the noblest of Ulama, Hakimul Ummat, Mujaddid-e-Millat, Qutbul Irshaad, Maulana Shah Muhammad Ashraf Ali Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh).

All actions commanded by the Shariah are volitional (ikhtiyaari – within the ambit of man's freewill). In *ikhtiyaari* matters the remedy is nothing other than mustering up courage and the utilisation of free will (ikhtiyaar). Superficially, this appears to be a simple matter. If so, then what importance can be attached to the Tareeq (i.e. Tasawwuf)?

While it is indeed a simple matter, people do not pay attention to it. On this, i.e. people's attention and concern, is based all reformation and this is the actual remedy for all deficiencies.

Someone asked: "When a man, inspite of his efforts, fails in his attempts to reform himself, he seeks treatment and remedies for his spiritual ailments. To then tell him to adopt courage and employ his freewill, will not be sufficient because he simply lacks the taufeeq for courage and the utilisation of freewill." In reply, Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

It should firstly be ascertained if he is able to utilise his freewill or not. Most certainly, he has the ability. If not, it will follow that the Nusoos (Qur'aan and Hadith) are false. When man does have the ability to employ his ikhtiyaar, he should muster up courage and do so.

Whenever freewill is employed, success will be achieved. The question of failure simply does not arise. It is, however, conceded that difficulty is involved in this process.

Someone said: "Truly speaking, freewill cannot be denied. However, if on account of difficulty, freewill is not employed then of what use is the freewill? The net result is the same as in the case of one having no freewill, viz. abstention from righteousness." Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

When a remedy is requested, it is only proper to inform (the patient) of the proper remedy. The difficulty in adopting the remedy is another matter. Regarding volitional (ikhtiyaari) matters, the remedy for deficiencies is nothing other than the employment of one's freewill. The treatment for the difficulty involved in the process is also courage and freewill. It is essential to apply pressure on oneself to employ one's freewill. Gradually the difficulty will dissipate and be replaced with ease. The purpose of all mujaahadah (struggle against the nafs) is in fact, to achieve ease in the adoption of the commands and abstention from the prohibitions of the Shariah.

I always say that sincerity and courage are the essence of Tasawwuf. Without courage, practice is not possible. Minus sincerity, practising righteousness will be defective. If both these essentials are combined, there will be no need for even a Shaikh because a shaikh teaches these two requirements, viz. eliminating hardships and acquiring ease.

Every task seems difficult initially. Constant practise renders it easy. In the beginning, learning a lesson is difficult, but swotting enables one to remember it. If the effort is abandoned on account of the initial difficulty, there will be no way of achieving success. If the difficulty is borne, ease will follow in a short time.

Someone asked: "Is ikhlaas (sincerity) also ikhtiyaari (i.e. to be adopted by one's freewill)?" Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

Since its acquisition is commanded, most certainly it is volitional (ikhtiyaari). The Shariat does not impose anything which is beyond man's volitional control.

Maintaining the purity of Ibaadat is called ikhlaas.

Someone said: “The duaa and barkat of the Shaikh also play a prominent role in Islaah (moral reformation).” Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

Barkat is not denied. However, its capacity should be understood. It serves as an aid. It is not the actual remedy. Nothing will be achieved (in the matter of Islaah) with only duaa and barkat as long as one does not employ one’s own freewill. No one is superior than Rasulullah (ﷺ) with regard to barkat and acceptability of duaa. The devotion and sacrifice of his uncle Abu T~lib were profound. Rasulullah (ﷺ) further supplicated fervently and wholeheatedly for him to enter the fold of Islam, and in his endeavour he persisted. But, since Abu T~lib himself had desired Imaan, he was not blessed with this wealth.

This matter is comparable to a physician and a patient. If the patient refuses to submit to the treatment, will the physician’s affection and attention suffice for curing? Health will be gained from his prescription. Similarly, if the pupil refuses to learn his lesson, how will he know it. The lesson cannot be remembered by only the teacher’s affection and attention. Effort is essential. While barkat is an aid, it is not sufficient. But employment of ikhtiyaar can be sufficient even without the duaa of the Shaikh.

I publicly announce these things. I do not wish to unnecessarily fetter my associates to me. The Shaikh simply guides the mureed along the road. He does not drag the mureed along the road. The person with sight indicates the path to the blind. He does not carry the blind on his lap. The blind will have to do the walking themselves. Undoubtedly, it is the function of the Shaikh to show the path. But, it is the responsibility of the mureedeen to strive along the path.

Al-humdulilah! I deliver the searcher to Allah in a single session because I show the reality of the goal. In other words, he is delivered to the maqsood (goal). It now only remains to walk along the road. This is within the volitional control of the taalib (searcher).

Ikhtiyaar is self-evident, in fact, a tangible fact. The self-evident and tangibles do not require proof. Even animals perceive the faculty of freewill. It is a glaring fact. If a dog is hit with a stick, it attacks the person wielding the stick. It does not attack the stick. The dog too understands that it is the person who has freewill, not the stick.

Every person should examine his heart when he perpetrates a despicable act. He will feel a sense of shame. If he is truly helpless, being unable to exercise his freewill, he will not be smitten by shame. One feels shame over a volitional act committed. Man's ikhtiyaar is thus an irrefutable fact.

The question of ikhtiyaar is so conspicuous that every man intuitively and naturally understands this reality. Even the fatalist who verbally proclaims the non-existence of freewill, intuitively understands that man does have freewill. There is no scope for the denial of this reality.

Although no one knows the actual reality of freewill, it does not follow that it is non-existent. Inspite of the nature and reality of light being unknown, its existence is bright and conspicuous.

Man, however, lacks total freewill. His freewill is subservient to Allah's Freewill. He does not posses independent freewill. However, he does not totally lack the faculty of freewill. He has, therefore, to exercise this ability in the process of his moral reformation. Without this, islaah is not possible, e.g. a man has the ailment of bukhl (stinginess). This ailment cannot be eliminated only with thikr and the duaa and attention of the Shaikh. It will be eliminated only by opposing the dictates of the nafs. Yes, thikr and duaa will aid him, but will not alone be adequate.

Someone said: "By the tawajjuh (the spiritual gaze) of some Auliya, great criminals were automatically reformed." Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

This is a kind of tasarruf (operation of the baatin). Such tasarruf is neither ikhtiyaari nor is it a requirement of piety. Many Auliya, in fact, lack the power of tasarruf. Furthermore, in most cases, the effect of tassarruf is

temporary. After a short while, the person reverts to his former condition. On the other hand, the effect of effort and courage which are adopted to practise virtuous deeds, is enduring. The effect of tasarruf is like the warmth one derives when sitting by a heater. One feels the warmth as long as one sits by the heater. The moment one leaves the proximity of the heater, one feels the cold. True benefit, is the benefit which is lasting.

Mere reliance on duaa and tawajjuh without making effort to reform oneself is a baseless idea.

Someone said: "Natural propensities cannot be changed. How then is it possible to reform natural evil qualities by means of freewill?" Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) said:

It is surprising that you still harbour these doubts. Tell me, are both matter and action natural? It is conceded that matter (i.e. the material substance in man's body) is not within man's control. However, action is within his freewill. Action is not natural. While it is not possible to eliminate what is natural, it is within the purview of freewill to act according to or to abstain from the dictates of natural propensities. Man is responsible for only what is within his volitional power (ikhtiyaar).

Repeatedly opposing the natural dictates, weakens them. These are important lessons, but nowadays they are not discussed, neither by the Ulama nor by the Mash~-ikh. Tasawwuf is present as an ambiguous concept. Precisely for this reason has the reality of Tasawwuf been hidden for a considerable period. Al-hamdulillah! It has now been clarified. There no longer remains any ambiguity in Tasawwuf. Al-hamdulillah! I don't have the slightest doubt and uncertainty in any question of Tasawwuf nor in diagnosing any condition of the taalib (searcher, the mureed) or in prescribing any plan of treatment irrespective of the degree of the degeneration of the condition.

Consider this clarification in this age as a fortune, value it and derive benefit therefore.

Of the two requirements, viz. ikhlaas (sincerity) and himmat (courage), the latter is of primary importance. Courage is needed to produce sincerity. The aid for courage is alertness / awareness (istihzaar) which has different forms. The mureed should adopt whichever form the Shaikh prescribes. e.g. performing about ten raka'ts Nafl Namaaz for every error. The fear of this type of imposition will create awareness. Once alertness and awareness have been acquired, immediately practise righteousness with courage and suppress the dictates of the nafs. In this way will one be saved from transgression, Insha'Allah. Gradually, total islaah (moral reformation) will be achieved.

Besides, the aforementioned form of a fine which I have prescribed for the taalib, I have also devised the daily reading of Nazhatul Basaateen in which is compiled one thousand stories of the Auliya of Allah Ta'ala. In addition to barkat, considerable spiritual strength, courage and awareness will be derived.

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'And it is not on us, but to deliver the message.'

ADVICE

An advice which Hadhrat Thanvi (rahmatullah alayh) gave to someone is added here.

"Taa-at (obedience) and ma'siyat (sin) are both ikhtiyaari acts. Recitation of wazifahs has no bearing on these issues. The method in volitional acts is only to employ volition. There is no other way. However, ease is necessary for freewill to activate the process of mujaahadah (struggle against the nafs). The reality of mujaahadah is opposition to the nafs which means perpetual resistance to the dictates of the nafs.

Perpetual employment of resistance against the nafs will bring about ease. In this (advice) have I ensconced the whole science of Tasawwuf. Further, there devolve two functions on the Shaikh:

Diagnosis of nafsaani ailments.

Prescription of methods of mujaadahad as the treatment for the ailments.”